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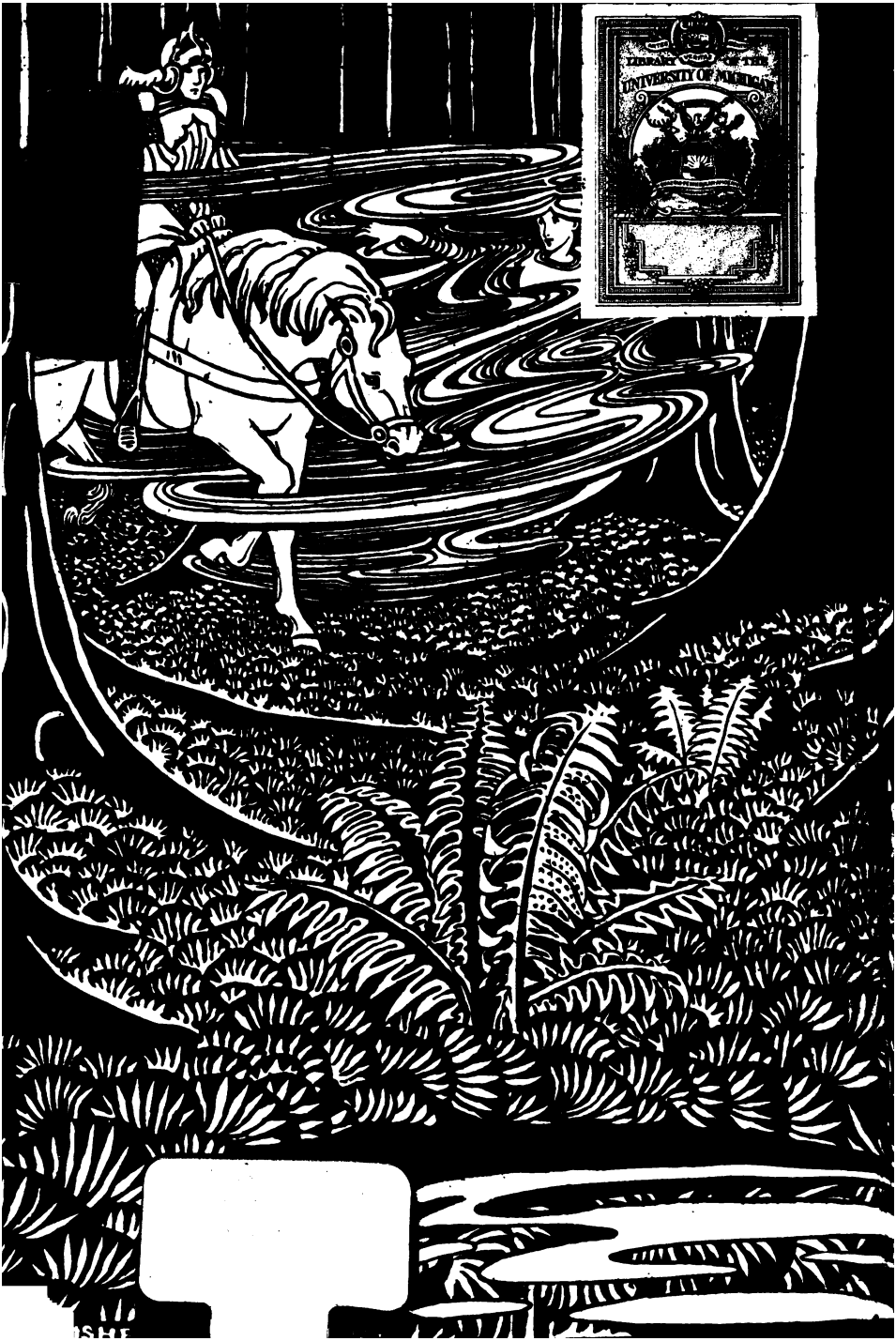

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UNDINE.

UNDINE

A LYRICAL DRAMA

BY

E. HAMILTON MOORE.

AUTHOR OF

"RIENZI" & "YGRAINE

MANCHESTER

SHERRATT AND HUGHES

1902

To

The Memory of my Grandfather,

JAMES McKAY,

I dedicate this Poem of his Fairyland.

173527

The Dedication.

Many years ago I walked beside you, I, a child, by you, a man, grey-headed but child-hearted, in the always impressive silence of the pine wood.

You put into my hand a golden key with which to unlock the gate of Fairyland.

Behind that wall, you said, lies a great water, upon whose bosom are borne fairy frigates sailing, whence—no man knows, and wither—who may tell? And there is moonlight over all, and on the margin of the inland sea are green clad Ladies, dancing.

Look, with your key I have unlocked my garden of enchantment. I turn to ask you if the prospect likes you, but you are no more beside me. Nevertheless I cross the threshold of my Fairyland, your name upon my lips.

Argument.

The story telleth of Lothaire, the Knight. How he rode at adventure through the great forest of this world, and heard therein the singing of elfin folk; and the sweet enchantments of the Fay Morgana who makes fair cheer to those whom she will undo; and the labouring of the Goblins who are earth-bound and gold-bound; yea, and the great rejoicing also of things created, both large and small, of the wood and of the water, and the hymns of those that are set free and watch above this world.

Behold there cometh to him so riding, one who demands and claims his love, and loyalty of all his life henceforward. To whom he is none the less free to yea or to nay-say her this her asking. Yet, being warned, he granteth all her prayer, and that upon the instant, and being thereafter disappointed of his desires, he falleth into discontent and brooding, distrusting of her word and of that hopeful vision of his youth, and lastly into disloyalty and forgetfulness.

Whereof follow on great woes, and not to him alone. So that in the midst of bitterness fain is he to call aloud for Death and for his first Beloved. And she, returning to him like the lost ideal of a better day, and mighty through her love, granteth to him this token at the last, her kiss and longed-for Death.

Dramatis Personæ.

LOTHAIRE.

THE PRINCE OF LIMOURS, *his Father.*

SIR RAYMOND OF THE FENS, *his Friend.*

THE MARGRAVE OF MAGDEBURG.

FRITZ.

A KNIGHT, COUNT ROLAND.

CONRAD, *a Taverner.*

TWO FRIARS.

LOTHAIRE'S SQUIRE.

ROLAND'S SQUIRE.

A PAGE.

A HERALD.

UNDINE, *a Water nymph.*

NICOLETTE, *Lothaire's sister.*

A FLOWER GIRL.

AN OLD WOMAN.

YOLANDE.

FELICIA, AMOROSA, } *Two of Yoland's damsels.*

THE FATA MORGANA.

Knights, Ladies, Spirits, Goblins etc.

Act I.

The Forest and the Vow.

SCENE I.—The Enchanted Forest.

A wild woodland glade with a torrent running through it. The ground is strewn with moss-grown rocks which have fallen from the mountain, which may be dimly seen through the trees, girdled by the belt of forest. The path, a mere track with streams crossing it, winds between crag and boulder, and deep clear pools where white and yellow lilies bloom on the still water. It is morning.

The Voice of the Torrents.

O gladding light, I hail thee as I rise!
One moment let me greet thee ere I pass,
One moment, as I tremble, quiver,
A rounded silvery globe, thy glass,
Soon lost, soon blended with the river.
O free, free, free from earth's dark prison
To sport on her breast,
In the light of the sun new risen,
In the faint last glow in the west.
Each separate drop a life complete
A perfect, an individual whole,
Sprung into day from its dark retreat,
Being, unburdened by soul!
Greeting the light,
Sparkling, dancing,

One moment glancing
In rainbow radiance, then from the height
Leaping, advancing, foaming white;
Fused with the rest in one full stream,
Glistening in sunshine of golden noon,
In the rays of stars, and the pure, cold beam
Of the magic creating moon.

On—I am swept down the dizzy fall,
I murmur, I hum in the dark ravine
Where the rocks rise up, a blackening wall,
Where at noon the planets are seen,
Wheeling their round.
On—I am dew in the heart of a flower;
I am lost underground;
I mount, I dissolve,
I am pearl in mist, I am silver in shower;
Again I descend,
With my sisters to blend—
By the mossy bank where the firefly glows,
By the tufted larch,
By the budding beech,
We are swept, we are whirled
'Neath a rainbow arch,
Thro' a magical, mystical world.
  One moment's life was granted to each,
As it struggled, arose
From the darkness of earth,
One separate song, one life greeting speech

In its moment of birth,
Then on, for ever, the river flows.

THE VOICE OF THE TREES.

THE PINES. O Mother Earth, within whose bosom
Root-fast beneath the heavens we stand,
O dark and dawn, and shrouding snow,
O hidden springs, whose secret sources
In silence lave the deep plunged fibre,
And feed the life below;
Springtime, and fall, and frost—all forces
That sustain, support our being
Beneath the overarching blue:
Be solemn song and honour due!

THE BIRCHES. In my branches sits and sings
A Spirit, unequipped with wings
For inconstant flight.
In the masses of her hair
Wears a green-leaved garland bright,
Wears alternate leaf and fruit
Woven there.
Goblin gold beneath my root
Is given to her as dower;
Laughing spirits of the air
Hear her singing, speak her fair,
Dew and sunlight on her shower.
In my boughs the sap is beating
To her rhythmic melody;

Stars, and winds, and streams are fleeting,
And the waves, to harmony;
And with theirs, her song is heard,
Tutoring the forest bird,
Guiding upwards plant and flower,
While the gold-eyed god of noon,
While the silver-footed moon,
With the planets in their height,
From afar upon us shower,
Harmony and light.

SPIRITS OF THE AIR. Harmony and light!
Spirits of delight!
Sister spirits of the air,
Have ye seen? Have ye heard?
There is stellar harmony,
There is music of the spheres,
Pitched in too divine a key
For duller ears.
Hearken! Hearken! everywhere,
In the planetary spaces,
Where immensity is stirred
By the constant revolution,
Of great suns without a name,
Gradual light the dark displaces,
Mounts and quickens like a flame,
To the mystic, interfused melody,
Ye have heard, only ye;
In a realm where all confusion

Is unknown:
Ye alone,
Sister spirits of the air,
Ye are there, ye are there.

A change comes over the Forest. It grows dusk, and at the same time the lights and shadows are intensified as when a storm is near. The green of the trees becomes garish, and the flowers glow brilliant in colour, and yield a scent almost overwhelming. The murmur of the waters becomes musical, and the tree tops rustle in a shuddering wind. From branch and bush gleam the fair eyes of nymph and dryad; from crag and rock peer the yellow faces of goblins, while from a deep and blossomed pool, a water maiden, leaning her whiter breasts upon the lilies, shakes out her yellow hair among the reeds. The earth trembles, and the goblins, labouring in its depths, break into singing.

THE GOBLINS. In the heart of the flame, in the deep of the earth,
We labour and toil
At a task full of mirth;
Where the red dragons coil,
Who have watched o'er the gold
Since Creation's first birth—
Generations untold.
From their eyes shines a fire

Thro' the dusk of our gloom;
A pale shifting green,
A clear changing yellow,
That dances still higher
Till it lights the black dome,
Deep, dark as a tomb,
The earth-goblins' home.

And each on his fellow
Gazes and gapes and between his grim talons
Grips hard on the gold,
And their tears flow in gallons
For maidens forgotten, for heroes of old.

But while they are dreaming
Of heroes forgotten,
Their bright scales are gleaming,
And glancing, and changing
To flakes of pure gold.

And while they are dreaming
On fair maids (the mould
Has long turned them rotten)
The great tears run beaming,
And fall on the ground,
And hiss with a sound
Like hot water hissing.

Great tears turn to pearls,
To emeralds and topaz,
While they dream on the girls
Whom once they were kissing.

And ever we labour in light of their eyes,
And we gather the gems, we toil, ah, we toil,
Deep, deep in the soil
In a flame still ascending,
A task never ending
We labour and toil.

A Dryad. Why, why this labour?

Another. Sister, dost not know?

Coiled about the central flame,
Lies a dragon green and golden,
Porphyrogene his name.
He the Earth-King's eldest born
Weds the whitest child of Water,
Of the hoary prince, the olden
White beard babbling King of Water.
Fair Undine before the morn
Thou shalt be the Earth-King's daughter.
Ah, well may these prepare for her delight
Ruby, pearl and crysolite,
Moonstones, pale with silver light,
And carven flowers of gold with silver buds between.

A Voice. Ah, but where is fair Undine?
Wherefore do her tears run down?
Wherefore doth she weep?

The moon no more shall see thee lave
Thy bosom in the reed grown wave,

Or where the lilies dream by day,
And swing upon the moving water.
But still thy white feet must delay,
And still thy goings may not stray
From out that dragon-haunted cave,
When thou shalt be the Earth-King's daughter.

VOICES *(high in air)*. See where Undine dreams apart,
Where the shadows thickest fall!
Is it love, is it sleep,
Hath the maiden's heart in thrall?
With a strange new hope her heart
Is dimly stirred.
She hath hearkened, she hath heard
Strange new speech and whispered word;
Patient watch will she keep.

VOICES *(below)*. Vain are all the maiden's tears,
Vain her trembling hopes and fears,
Tho' she weep with endless grieving,
Winged bats shall bear the bride
Swiftly to the bridegroom's side.
Never more the earth cave leaving,
Fair Undine, the child of water,
Must be now the Earth-King's daughter.

GOBLINS *(sing in chorus)*.

The Earth-King's daughter, the maiden,
With jewels heavily laden,

With long locks trailing,
All bespangled with gold!

The falling stars are shooting,
The owls are crying and hooting,
The winds are prisoned, and wailing
The maiden to behold.

The lizards are running and gleaming,
The eyes of dragons are beaming,
Thro' the wrack is sailing,
A host of warriors bold.

VOICES.

Ah, who are these who hurry past?
Fair forms, to wait upon the bride,
A company how strange, how vast!
How swift upon the wind they ride!

A Song is heard.

THE SONG.

Oh, come! Oh, come! the silver beam
Of moonlight quivers on the stream.
The water nymphs, as white as she
Who rides at night above the sea,
Sport in the ray, and sing and dream
Of love's delights and thee.

Come! Oh come! for the maidens are dancing,
The elf-ring is trodden, still greener, still wider,

The diamond dews of the moon are glancing
On gossamer webs of the red-backed spider.
The fay, the dryad, the leprechaun,
The nixie, the elf and the dreaming faun,
Witches and wizards wildly advancing,
With spirits of light from the stars of dawn,
Ah, Venus herself, with the Graces to guide her,
Venus herself, in beauty entrancing,
Dances, the Loves beside her.

A GOBLIN. Hush! Someone comes!

A SECOND. It is a mortal tread!

VOICES. Who dares approach? Seize on him! He is ours.

SPIRITS OF THE AIR. It is the Knight, the promised Knight, who comes.

GOBLINS. Within the circle of the Elfin powers
What mortal strays to-night shall surely perish!

SPIRITS. Ah, no, the high hope let her ever cherish.
Now Undine, the fairest daughter
Of the ancient King of Water,
On this night is free to gain
A human soul.

VOICES. A human soul!
What is a human soul? We know not.

SPIRITS. Joy it shall bring, and Pain.

VOICES. Ah, Pain!
Ah, what is Pain? Who can tell?
None can tell us, none can say.

SPIRITS. Yea, we have known, we have seen,
We have watched what hath been
From Creation's earliest day,
We have seen, we can say.

Ah, heard ye not the gladsome voice
At early dawning breaking?
The whole creation shall rejoice,
In this her joy partaking.
Ah come, ah come, long-looked for, come at last.

GOBLINS. Ah, hear ye not the clamorous voice,
Of ancient dragon waking?
To stay the maiden's fatal choice,
Among the gold he's raking.
Ah, nay! Ah, nay! our power shall hold thee fast?

A Knight enters; he is clad in complete armour, and he leads his startled horse by the rein. As he advances phantom forms flock about him, some beckoning him on, others warning him back. Before him with half-averted face, and outstretched arms, floats the gracious figure of the FATA MORGANA.

FATA MORGANA.

Oh leave thy vain quest,
For my kisses are best!
'Neath the hill, 'neath the steep,
Where the waters run deep,
Thou shalt lie on my breast;
Thou shalt dream, thou shalt sleep,
Thou shalt rest.

LOTHAIRE. Oh whither, lovely phantom, would'st thou lure me?
Ah stay, ah stay! One moment, maiden, tarry.

GOBLINS. Lead him, lead him, to thy bower,
Let him not escape thy power.

VOICES. Who the Knight is hither guiding?

OTHERS. 'Tis the stream, so softly sliding,
'Tis the loudly wailing river;
On his waves the cold winds shiver.
Brother Water, ancient Water,
Wilt thou lead him to thy daughter?

THE STREAM. Doom is on me! I must do it.

VOICES. Trip him, lead him far astray,
Surely, surely he shall rue it,
If he steal Undine away.

THE STREAM. Comrade, comrade, canst thou hear?
Darkness comes, and the spirits
Of the night are abroad.
How we tremble, how we fear,
How our heart goes cold for trouble
When we hear
At our side
The old man glide!
When his voice goes bubble, bubble,
In our ear,
How the fright our limbs benumbs.
Ha ha, comrade, darkness comes.

LOTHAIRE. What phantom forms are these that mock me?
What voices cry so loudly in my ear?
Avaunt, avaunt, my good blade shall protect me;
Still will I on, no fear shall turn me back.

GOBLINS. Ha! ha! ha! Ha! ha! ha!
Hark how loud the mortal's boasting.
Lead him, lead him far astray,
Fires are ready for his roasting,
He shall be the goblins prey.
Maidens, with your singing sweet,
Water sprite and luring fay,
Will ye let him pass? Ah, never!
Mock, delude him, snare his feet,
Bind him in your toils for ever.

THE WATER-MAID. See the stream is gleaming white
In the darkness of the night,
Fairer than by day.
Ah, how deep! Ah, how cool,
Is the lily covered pool!
Ah, delay! Ah, delay!
Ah, how sweet is Love's delight!

THE DRYADS. Briars and weeds trip and tangle,
Creepers that from tree tops dangle
Snare his feet, bind him tight!
Ah, how sweet is Love's delight!

THE GOBLINS. Gold and gems upon him shower,
Pelt him, stone him, flames spring high;
Let him not escape our power.
Toad, and snake, and serpent's eye
Beam from rock, and stream, and flower,
Let him never more pass by.

THE STREAM. 'Tis your fancy if the stream,
Running over stones, should seem
To find a voice and utter words
In the silence of the night;
Can you see my white beard wagging?
Do I feign it, comrade, well?
You would still be talking, bragging,
Could you cast aside *your* shell,

And run like water on the ground,
Half as well, half as well.

The FATA MORGANA *again appears; and seizes the bridle of the horse.*

FATA MORGANA.
Oh, wherefore delay?
Too soon is the day;
'Neath the hill, 'neath the steep,
I will rock thee asleep,
Ere the dawn glimmer grey.
Kiss long, ah, kiss deep,
While ye may.

LOTHAIRE. Ah, turn! Ah, turn!

A VOICE. Beware, thou boldest knight.

LOTHAIRE. Who calls?

THE VOICE. It is a fatal song thou hearest,
And she who doth entice thee is a fiend.

The fay vanishes with a wildly mocking laugh.

LOTHAIRE. Spells and enchantments! Mary, be my aid!

THE VOICE. Nay, fear not thou.

LOTHAIRE. Who calls on me so loud?

GOBLINS. Who cried?

DRYADS. It was a voice from yonder cloud,
That veils the rising moon.

ALL. Let us begone.

LOTHAIRE *(kneeling)*. Oh, Mary, mother, maid divine,
Look down upon thy Knight.
The lilies of the milky way
Around thy throne for tapers shine,
And shed on earth a hallowed light,
To guide the feet that stray.
Ah, let thy gracious help be mine,
And succour thro' the fears of night,
To bring me to the day.

A quiver of sighing wind passes over the forest. The forms of goblin and elf and dryad fade slowly from sight, and the moon shines down through the branches of the trees. A soft strain of music, faint and far away, grows on the air. As LOTHAIRE *rises from his knees the moonlight floods the whole glade.* UNDINE, *a young girl of strange and unearthly loveliness, is seated by the stream. She sways lightly as she sits, and with her outstretched hand appears to lay some charm upon the hurrying water.*

LOTHAIRE. Calm! all is calm! Oh, surely I have slept!
Like evil dreams at break of dawn, the shapes

Of fear have fled before the power of prayer.
What is that sound? Oh! sweet, most sweet and
strange,
As tho' the spirits high in air made mirth,
Singing to little harps. And she! Is she
Also a dream? Or do my waking eyes
Behold the accomplishment of all desires,
All dreams and prayers? Tell me thy name, thy
name!

UNDINE *turns, extending her hands. He advances, clasps them and looks deeply into her eyes. But neither speaks or stirs, and while they are thus, the music grows into form and singing, high above the forest.*

Ah, human Love! Ah, human Love!
Power that knits us heart to heart,
What might is thine,
All might above!
Hearts enlinked what power shall part
Heart from heart, heart from heart?

Ah, Love divine, Love divine,
Burning in the human soul,
Purest passion to impart,
What excelling might is thine!

Ah gracious Love! Who then shall give us Love,
Sweet human Love, strong Love divine?

Come, oh Love, and set us free
From the never-ending thrall
Of a life that knows not thee.
Spirits in their liberty
Ever call, ever call;
Bind us in thy bondage, thine,
Teach us Love, thy mastery,
Dear human Love, strong Love divine,
Ah, gracious mystery! Who shall teach us Love?

UNDINE. Thou art come then! I have waited thee so long!
When the first tuft hung from the reddening larch,
And, from the palm, the earliest dust of gold
Lay on the crystal of the pool, like stars
Far strewed above my head—the wind of Spring
Rippling the water into little waves,
I thought your breathing. Surely you have come
Like a Spring wind! and, later, when the sweet,
Wild rose of Summer, bending from the briar,
Looked larger through the flood, and drooped its head
Quite under, weighed with dew, I kissed its red,
Drenched petals: Ah, they breathed on me perfume
Like Love's first kisses, when the ruddy lip
Should blanch a little with excess of joy.
And still you came not; but the Autumn came,

And strewed the stream with purple leaves and
gold,
Till all the flood had on a bridal robe.
And I would weave them in my hair and watch
At even, when the lustrous yellow moon
Shone thro' the thinning boughs, and wait for you.
And then the Winter bound the flood, and stayed
The pulsing of the sap in every plant.
The pines were white with snow, and not a voice
Broke the long hush, save where the central flame
Glows, and the goblins at their age-long task
Sing to the sleeping dragons. And I slept,
I too, through many Winters. In my sleep
The world was made all new, for then, I thought,
You came to me, and gave me love and life.
Now you have come, at last, fulfil my dreams,
And give me love, for I have waited long.

LOTHAIRE. For what else came I here? I have
forgot
My questing; and the deeds of days gone by,
And promised prowess of the years to be
Fall from me. Yet I am a Knight of fame,
Lothaire my name, a noble Paladin
Among the peers of the great Emperor.
Tell me thy name, that I may fight for thee;
Tell me thy name, that I may cry aloud
Thy beauty at the tilt, and speak thy praise
Among fair dames, and valiant men-at-arms.

UNDINE. Alas! Alas! Thy words are strange to me.
And all thou tellest of thy world is strange.
Nothing I know save the deep forest pools,
And running waters, and the wandering wind.
How shall I tell thee what and whence I am,
Who bear no kinship with thy mortal mould?
Yet, if I tell thee, wilt thou love me still?
By all my dreams of thee I conjure thee,
That thou wilt hearken me, and love me still.

LOTHAIRE. O, lest the spell be broken,
Leave, leave the word unspoken;
I ask no name.
What louder utterance needs it?
Behold the spirit reads it,
Love is thy name.

Now while thine eyes are resting
On mine, the Knightly questing
Forgotten quite;
Beloved, to thee replying
I promise faith undying,
This troth I plight.

This, henceforth, be my glory,
This love be all the story
Writ of Lothaire.
Set what thou wilt to prove me,
I can but say I love thee,
To all I swear.

UNDINE. Alas, before thou swear,
Hear me, Lothaire.
Too little dost thou ask of me,
Too little, and unworthily.
Yet if thou ask no more than this,
Needs must I grant thee all thy prayer;
And for a space we too shall know
The root and blossom of Love's bliss,
But after bitter woe.
Dost thou so lightly promise all I ask?
Nay, hear me first, for 'tis no careless task;
And if thou swear, and keep not fealty,
Behold, great sorrow overwhelmeth thee.

LOTHAIRE. Again I swear to all that thou shalt ask,
Upon my soul I swear.

UNDINE. *Upon thy soul!*
Behold the sign, behold the promised word
That Love should soul impart and life eternal!
Swearest thou? Turn not then away
Till thou hast heard what thing I ask of thee.

Of water sprung, from thence my birth,
Yet linked by hapless fate to earth,
Not human, though such form be mine,
As those who bear a hope divine
Of conscious being after death,
O, hear what words my vision saith,

The dreaming hope that beats its wings
Within me to diviner things.
For thus upon my heart the spell,
Long since, with potent promise fell:
If human love thy life shall win,
If pure from human stain and sin
Thy love be cherished in thy breast;
With sprinkled water holy blest,
More blest with baptism of love,
That links thy life to life above:
Thou too shalt rise, thou shalt possess
A still undying consciousness
That upward soars to God, the goal
And end of every human soul.

This was my vision. Ah, fulfil it thou.

LOTHAIRE. Behold, a wonder this thou tellest to me!

Knowest thou what thou askest? I have been
Proud, lustful, arrogant, and praised of all;
And very rich and mighty, and the son
Of a great prince, and only in my dreams
Have I heard tell of such a love as thine.
What soul were mine to share? If fealty,
If passionate kisses sealed upon that brow
God's lips have kissed before and signed for true,
If in such love as this lie thy redemption,
I take my vow:

Beloved, I will forego my princely fame,

And dwell for ever in this forest glade
Where I may dream of nothing else but thee.
And when the dawning reddens with its flame
Those bare, high piled crags, awake to see
Thyself and all thy sisters rising up
Among the yellow lilies of the pool,
To greet me with thy kiss. And, the noon thro',
We two might linger where the shade lay cool
Of some great rock, moss grown and grey with dew
From wide flung spray of torrent, flashing bright,
Among the dripping leaves and gleaming ferns,
Some tender green, and some grown ivory white,
Pined and exiled from light.
Then should'st thou tell of long-forgotten loves
In cool caves of the sea, and where the weeds,
Crimson and green and purple float and fall
About the gleaming limbs and glancing scales
Of mermaidens, and sirens of the sea,
Who sit at even on the crags and lure
Across the silver foam, the voyager.

UNDINE. Alas! not thus-wise is redemption wrought,
But with great labour is the prize obtained.
A soul! Give me a soul! What were thy love
If we must part at last, and I should go
Into the dark, and thou into that light

Where I might never follow, and wherein
Thou should'st forget my kiss? Give me a soul!
For therefore art thou come. O, see to it
Thou fail me not, nor to thyself be traitor.
Give me a soul, beloved, that I may die
The sooner, having loved thee. What avails
That I should live a thousand, thousand years
When thy loved head were lying in the grave?
Give me a soul; for now I know full well,
That tho' you did this sin, all for my love,
Hereafter love should be the poorer for it.
And I, I too, have longings toward that light,
That fuller light of which they sing who stray
Upon the highest peaks, and chant their songs
At evening, from among the sunset clouds;
Sweet songs, that, like the music of a bell
I heard a hermit carry through the wood,
Chime through the clear wave, musical and low.
And hark, again begins their melody.

A Song of the SPIRITS OF LIGHT.

Behold, true love's salvation
Is set before thine eyes;
Endure the short probation,
Obtain the lasting prize.

Put by thy proud disdaining,
Embrace the common good,
With scorn nor hatred staining
The all wide brotherhood.

And know the earth thy mother
From whom thou didst begin,
Nor man alone thy brother,
But all her children kin.

With ever upward soaring
On ever stronger wing,
One thankful soul, adoring,
Love's victory shall sing.

Ah, change not thou, nor alter,
Lest, like a bird new slain,
Those pinions flag and falter,
And sink to earth again.

Lo, like a shy ideal,
I haunt thee with my kiss,
Abiding still, the real,
I crown thy life with bliss.

For now as thou shalt woo me,
I make or mar thee quite,
To bless thee or undo thee,
To give thee day or night.

And now within thy keeping
Is set my joy or dole,
Regret and bitter weeping,
Or the still praising soul.

Behold, a new creation,
O warrior, arise,
Endure the short probation,
And claim the lasting prize.

LOTHAIRE. To Love, to Faith, to Hope, to Loyalty,
Thro' life and afterward, I swear to it,
I swear to all.

UNDINE. Too swiftly hast thou sworn,
Counting no cost.

LOTHAIRE. My oath upon thy lips.

UNDINE. Ah stay, ah stay, nor give this hopeless pledge,
Lest its redemption prove my lasting loss;
Not yet this kiss. For now, the night is by,
And look, the dawn calls home the wandering stars
That have enlightened us with eyes of love.
Now little time is mine to speak with thee.
If thou dost love me, yet return again
To claim me when a year has sped its course.
A year and day are given to thee to prove
Thy faith to me. O till that date be past
Locked in thy heart, keep sacred what has happed,
And only with thy spirit hold thou commune
Of all this love, that, like the lotus flower,

Although it spreads its beauty to the sun
Strikes deep its roots into the silent dark.
List, list, I must away!

A horn blows loudly without.

LOTHAIRE. Ah, leave me not!
Why dost thou turn? Why dost thou quit my arms
To tread the moss-grown margent of yond' mere?
Look on me once again.

UNDINE. I must begone!

Again the horn is blown.

Hearest thou not? Farewell, my love, farewell,
Forget not thou!

LOTHAIRE. Turn, look on me! Alas!
Thy looks are wan, thy lips are pale, my love!
I see thee as in mist and through a cloud
Of whitened spray. Come back to me once more,
And kiss me once.

UNDINE. If I should kiss thee now
And thou should'st fail, my kiss should be thy doom,
Claiming thee mine for ever.

LOTHAIRE. Claim me then,
Body and soul of me.

UNDINE. Thou knowest not
The words thou sayest.

LOTHAIRE. While thy feet are wet
Among the shallow waters of the pool,
Kiss me, before thou fadest from my ken.

She stoops, pale and shadowy, to kiss him.

How cold a kiss!

UNDINE. It is the kiss of love—
The kiss that I have given. Is it so cold?
Ah, yet a colder kiss pressed by these lips
Upon thy brow must greet thee, if thou fail.
For now my kiss hath claimed and sealed thee mine,
And if thou quit me now, yet must I come,
And follow thee, and kiss thee once again
To sleep, the sleep, the colder sleep of death.

LOTHAIRE. Thy words are strange. I cannot see aright!

The horn blows again the third time, and the first ray of sunshine pierces the trees.

UNDINE. Farewell! Farewell! Farewell!

She fades slowly from sight on the edge of the pool.

LOTHAIRE *(turning sharply as the light dazzles him).* Ah, see! The dawn!
The sun pierces the trees, the birds awake!
The dew is cold and heavy on the ground.
Look, look my love! Ah, vanished as a dream!
Melted like silvery mist about the moon,
Or like the golden shining after rain
Slipping into the caves and pools of earth.
Ah, surely I have dreamed! Yes, I have dreamed.
But that cold kiss she left upon my brow
That was no dream!
Forget! Could I forget?
A year and day to prove my faith to thee?
Too light a test, my love, too swiftly passed!
Nay, hear me swear, I will return to thee;
And, till that day when I shall learn thy name
Forgotten be Lothaire! for I will ride
Unknown amidst a world that knows not thee,
My honour to oblivion dedicate,
Thy lilies for my emblem. Hark again!

A bugle blows close at hand.

Knights riding thro' the forest to the tilt,
With gleaming armour glancing in the first
Cold rays of morning. Surely I have dreamed!
No matter, dreams are best! Dreams make our life.
Nay, though the dream be death, yet will I dream,
And kiss thee once again, yet once again.

He leaves the margin of the pool and passes slowly out of sight. As he does so a company of riders appear, their bannerets fluttering from their lances, their armour reflecting the dancing rays of the sun. Immediately behind them a peasant follows with his flock, and the daylight slowly broadens as they wind among the trees, singing in cheerful chorus.

See the day is broad awake,
Hear the sheep bells how they jingle.
Starts the buck from forest brake,
Deeply hid in fern-grown dingle.

Every glittering leaf is stirred,
All its dew drops turned to splendour;
Loudly carols every bird,
Man his praise should also render.

Ride we through the green wood singing,
Ride we by the chiming river!
Hark, the bells, how gaily ringing,
While the lights of dawning quiver!

And these also in their turn pass out, and disappear, and are joined again to the little life of man; for they ride by wood and lonely gorge, down through the corn-set vallies, to the place where the Emperor has set his banner, and where the neighing chargers paw the dust of battle. But the life of the forest is older, and shall endure,

beholding their children and children's children to many generations. And the dawning mounts above the up-piled peaks, till all the forest is overflooded with its light, and joins in the hymn of Being, which is ever mixed with the murmur of morning winds, blowing about the cradles of awakened birds.

The dawn is come again! The dawn of light!
Fled is the darkness, fled once more the night,
And we awake, awake!
Light showers upon us from its primal sources,
Sunlight and warmth renew the pulsing forces,
And we, with joy, partake.
The dawn is come again, the climbing dawn,
Behind the hills is darkness far withdrawn;
Uplift, uplift the strain.
Lo, life begins again the old endeavour,
New life that was of old, is now, and shall be ever!
The dawn, the dawn, the dawn is come again.

The light ever broadens.

Act II.

At a Year's End.

At a Year's End.

Behold, with changeful shine and shower,
With winter's frost and summer's flower,
And stealing pace from day to day,
The year hath dreamed itself away.
  But was all dreaming, in good sooth?
And in the dream no half guessed truth
To stir the soul that waked, to bring
Its vision to some fruit bearing,
To deeds of loving brotherhood,
And labour for the common good?
  O happy he who thus translates
The unread riddle of his Fates;
Who, thro' his dream made strong, discerns
The end to which his being yearns,
And all his dream to action turns!
Not meaningless for him, nor vain
Are birth and death. He shall attain,
Altho' he fall, the promised goal,
Who hath this refuge in his soul.
  But sacred is that shrine: Who knows
The fount whence inspiration flows?
Shall he not rob of half its force
The deed who tells its hidden source?
He cannot speak it: words that fail
To speak it are the splendours veil.
The gate of Heaven is locked to him

Who babbles of the Seraphim.
  And worser woe is his to lot,
Who to his vision trusteth not,
Mocks his own dream and doth deny
The star that shapes his destiny.

  Even so, in cold and dull despair,
In bitter broodings, our Lothaire
Watches the slow year slip away,
Hides from his eyes the hopeful light,
And, being darkened, wails the night,
While all without, glad shineth day.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Palace of the Prince of Limours. On the wall hang rich tapestries. In the high window is set forth the story of the Questing of the San Greal. From the wide doorway the curtain is drawn aside. Without is a green mead, a hawthorn tree in blossom; beyond, a straggling fringe of poplars, yellow with young leaves; further, upon the uttermost of the horizon, spires of a distant city, dim and indistinct. Two gentlemen talking.

1ST GENT. You tell me marvels past the power
of thought.
Is he so changed?

2ND GENT. Had not mine own eyes seen it,
I scarce had lent my credence to the thing.
'Tis now twelve months agone this rapture took
him,
And made him, from—you know the man he was—
The monster of astonished admiration:
Changéd in gait, in habit, in attire,
Often alone, brief in his speech, in action
So odd he wakes contempt, if men could scorn
One who so kingly bears him; who, scorn lacking,
Watch with a danger apprehending eye,
The outcome of this most unheard transforming.

1ST GENT. I do remember me
That he was ever in extremes.

2ND GENT. 'Tis true, Sir.
He grows, indeed, most dangerous of late:
The broacher of new doctrines, strange, unheard of,
And tending to disorder in the State.

1ST GENT. What is the ground on which he hath returned
From following the Emperor? What offence?

2ND GENT. Sir, I was there. It was of Witikind,
The heathen Saxon. When the Emperor
(In that great clemency showing more like
A father than a conqueror) to save
The souls which else his own hand must despatch
To their most just damnation, offered baptism;
All being now prepared, these cursed heathen,
Who have opposed against his might so long,
Assembled, and the holy priests at hand:
Rises me this Lothaire, in sackcloth clad,
Kneels me before the Emperor, feigned tears
Forced to his eyes, crying the heavens to witness:
"*Your Majesty doth outrage God and man*
In this enforcement. Think you that the Highest
Hath but one Gospel, but one Baptism?
I tell you nay, the earth, this cold dull earth

Hath soul to praise. The soul-less know his power,
Goblin and water-nymph and wood-maiden:
This is no way. Love is the true salvation
There is none other." With that word, his last
In that assembly, over-manned and mastered,
He was dismissed; and, but for service past,
The thing had cost his death; but now, disgraced,
His father's anger hotly stirred against him,
These three months doth he brood about the Court,
And still his alteration grows to worse.

1ST GENT. He never yet hath known fit time or season
For act or word. He moves by impulse.

2ND GENT. Sir,
I pray to Heaven he cloak no more than this,
No darker policy in garb of frankness.
Methinks he hath the poor man's ear too much
With flattering terms engrossed. Let greater see to't.
Purpose you to the tilt?

1ST GENT. Aye; and yourself?

2ND GENT. I have had thoughts on't.
Shall we walk this way?

Exeunt.

Enter the PRINCE *and* SIR RAYMOND.

PRINCE. So Lothaire went not with you to the hunt?

RAYMOND. No! At the corner of the wood he turned and left us, and flung him down by a running stream, and there lay blinking in the summer sun like any bat.

PRINCE. Is this his wont of late?

RAYMOND. Aye, your Highness. And reason for this unreason: *that he will take no less pleasure in slaying brother man, than in slaying brother beast; nay, of the twain* . . . . but there he broke off, and I left him brooding. Yet marked I when he ate of the venison at the feast.

PRINCE. Have you seen him since?

RAYMOND. I heard his voice but now. He is with his sister.

PRINCE. He is with Nicolette, he is always with Nicolette. Lothaire! Lothaire! There by the hawthorn tree. Lothaire! He heeds me not. Yes, I have noted. He is changed and strangely. He, who was wont to be foremost in tilt and tourney, loving the chase, greedy of the applause of valorous actions, is now more quickly stirred by a rusty throated jongleur, telling of old loves, than by all the music that the spear rings to the byrnie;

rides alone, and, oftentimes with covered shield will he adventure many days among the gloomy forests and the desolate wild hills. You, Sir Raymond, know you naught of the cause of this change in him?

RAYMOND. His disgrace with the Emperor weighs on him. He talks much of ingratitude and broken hopes, says there is cruelty and injustice in the world, and sorrow and wrong on every wind that blows, and none to remedy.

PRINCE. Let him do, not talk, and the wrongs of the world will be the less. I have resolved, there shall be an end of it.

RAYMOND. Look, even as we speak, it is himself,
And yet, how changed from his former self,
Rapt as into a dream.

LOTHAIRE *enters.*

PRINCE. How now, Lothaire!
What, scarce awake?

LOTHAIRE. Your pardon, Sir, awake
In truth, and yet so wrapped in waking dreams
I did not see you.

PRINCE. Come, come! Let us hear these

dreams, let us know them. Come! is it bashfulness holds you dumb? Shall I guess your dreams?

LOTHAIRE. As you will.

PRINCE. As I will then! And I pray that your dreams be as I will, for in your waking hours these twelve months little has there been to my will.

LOTHAIRE. It is my sorrow.

PRINCE. And mine. What mean these weeds that so ignobly do disguise you?

LOTHAIRE. They suit my fancy.

PRINCE. They suit not mine.

LOTHAIRE. Methinks this plain-wrought vesture doth adorn me,
Better than ermine. With this simple cloak
I turn the wind as well as with the sail
Of floating silk, or pall like velvet, seeming
To drag still to the ground where we must lie
At last with little covering, and uncostly.
I am clad, even now, altho' your custom scorns me,
Better than he that tills your fields, and bears
The brunt of winter's cold.

PRINCE. Madness, pure madness!

LOTHAIRE. What! would you have a man a mere lay figure to hang rich garments on?

PRINCE. Nay, nor a scarecrow neither! Look upon me! Look upon Sir Raymond! Would you give half the thought to pleasure me . . .

LOTHAIRE. I am ready in all things lawful to your will.

PRINCE. All that I will is law. You shall marry I say.

LOTHAIRE. It is my hope. *(Aside).* Old age is choleric and obstinate. . . . . Patience, my father. I will bring you home a bride as fair as dreams.

PRINCE. Patience? I have had patience now five years. I am an old man. I want no dreams. Dreams fade, dreams die, dreams are the fruit of dark and idleness. I too have dreamed. That is long since. I am wiser now. I want no dreams. I want a grandson, one who shall wield the sword and sit firm in the shock of battle. To-morrow is tourney held in Magdeburg. Go you, ride you the tilt in honour of the fair Yolande, and having crowned her with the diadem, bring home your bride.

LOTHAIRE. Yolande of Magdeburg?

RAYMOND *(aside)*. Yolande!

PRINCE. The same.

LOTHAIRE. For the tourney, if it be your will, I am ready. For the lady, let him who desires her have her. For my part, I will marry where I love.

PRINCE. Love! you will love her enough to serve, I warrant! Love! save that your hand is strong and your stroke sure, one would say that a man had no part in your getting. But you shall go, you shall go. I have set my heart upon 't, I will not be gainsaid. Do you not hear me? I am an old man, but my blood is not ice, tho' my beard be snow. If you wed her not, I swear by Heaven you shall be no son of mine. For your sake I will be young again; I will father a worthier son, a doer not a dreamer. Sir Raymond, tell him, tell him what I have said.

Exit.

LOTHAIRE. Pouf . . . will my tongue so wag when I grow grey?
You heard my father, Raymond? . . . He is urgent.

RAYMOND. I heard. You are the prince's son, a Knight,

The most approved of noble exercise;
And I, untried, young in my years and honours—
Nay, is it worth conclusion? 'Tis so plain.

LOTHAIRE. We have been friends.

RAYMOND. *Have been.* Aye, you say true. What's friendship to a woman's love? Tell me that . . . Ah, you say nothing, and 'tis even so. This is it undoes more of your firm, cemented friendships than all man's hate.

If you should ride to-morrow,
To ride me down . . . no, no, I wrong you, friend,
You will not let a woman come between us;
I do remember me when I was sick,
You tended me. We have rid', walked, fought together;
Together in the desperate assay,
When yet my young squire valour was to prove,
Your fame a cloak to screen my poverty
And little worth; we have done all together . . .

LOTHAIRE. Aye, all, save dream.

RAYMOND. If you have dreamed, Lothaire, I have loved.

LOTHAIRE. Alone?
I have heard others call her beautiful.
I will not go to-morrow to the tilt,
I will not be your rival.

RAYMOND. Nay, Lothaire,
Not rival, brother. There are Knights so many
Nobler than I, what hope have I to win her?
When she hath blest some other with her kiss,
I have my friend, still. Come with me to-morrow.

LOTHAIRE. I will not go. I have had ill dreams of late.
My soul is full of fighting and mistrust,
Lest what I held prime motive to all action
Prove, in the grasping, but an empty shadow.

RAYMOND. Come, fight with men, fight side by side with me,
She is no shadow, win my bride for me!

LOTHAIRE. O, I am sick, sick, sick at heart, my Raymond!
The men whom I called brothers were the first
To spurn me. They had flattered had I crushed them.
All showed so clear before me till that day,
I was so sure, my brave world rising up,
My world, hers, ours, ay, hers and mine. . . .

RAYMOND. A woman?

LOTHAIRE. Raymond! I cannot longer keep it secret!
I met her in the forest, swore to her
Faith, love and secrecy; to go to her

When the year drew to end; to do her bidding
In all things. We would make new worlds together,
Bright worlds, glad worlds. O, it was false, false, false!
The voices bade me build on brotherhood,
On love; but all I built is toppling down
To ruin, and I too.

RAYMOND. Another dream!

LOTHAIRE. No dream! a truth! My father's hoarded gold
Rings cracked and false to it. Yet, O puzzlement!
Can you construe me this? If she were true,
Why has all failed me that she promised me?
Just at the outset of my hopeful quest
A cloud to shut the glory from my eyes . . .

RAYMOND. A cloud? Aye, and your glory was but cloudland,
So little shakes it. O, a dream, a madness,
A heat o' th' blood. Come, can you make new worlds?
You, are you God? However dear to me,
I cannot hold you God, not you, Lothaire.
Yet, that there is a God, who rules and brings
From our confusion, order, tho' I be
No learned Doctor, yet in truth I think it.
Then if He rules, there is no wrong at last,
'Tis blasphemy to think it. All is well.

LOTHAIRE. No wrong? All well?

RAYMOND. Ay, in the end, it must be;
Then act your part, you, in the world of deeds,
Leave off your dreams. There is no other world,
Than this we see about us—well enough
To leave its righting and the end to Him.

LOTHAIRE. But if He meant that I should right it, Raymond!

RAYMOND. You strove, Lothaire, and failed.

LOTHAIRE. Too true, too true!
Perhaps too quickly daunted, or—I know not!
What do you urge on me? I who have lived
In, for, what you call *dreams*. Now they have left me
Clean garnished for the Devils of despair,
What, shall I venture in your world of deeds?
Shall I not take the substance for the shadow,
Or after brooding in my moonlit dreamland,
Dazed by the hard, strong light of open day,
Stumble again, and fall into new folly?

RAYMOND. Come, come, and shake these dreadful fancies off.

LOTHAIRE. You dare to urge me?

RAYMOND. I dare everything
For you and her.

LOTHAIRE. I go, then. One condition:
I ride alone, untitled, and unknown,
Bear what device I will. 'Tis not Lothaire.
So if good fortune smile, I win your love,
My father's wished approval, and my freedom.
I shall slip out unnoted, and the acclaim,
Passing Lothaire, shall let me wander forth,
While you are kneeling at your lady's feet,
To where my dream is calling, free to her.

He goes out.

RAYMOND. Lothaire! Come back! Come back!
He hears me not!
Unnamed, unknown! This sudden acquiescence,
These strange conditions, and the stranger end . . .
I do repent me, lest it ill portend.
His doubts, his raptures, dreams, infect my mood,
Uncertain if this venture come to good.
Shake off these fears; and, with thy lance in hand,
Dream not, but act: strike, Raymond, for
Yolande!

As he is going, a voice, a child's voice, is heard without.

NICOLETTE. Raymond, Sir Raymond!

RAYMOND. Nicolette! What, playmate?

NICOLETTE *(singing).*

Down in the wood when flowers were gay,
A bird was piping on the spray,
All amid the blossoms sweet.
And what was the note he tuned all day
But *Love, Love, Love and well away,*
For the passing of spring is fleet.

Calls.

What, Raymond?

NICOLETTE *enters. She wears a straight, childish dress; her fair hair hangs loose on her shoulders; in her arm she carries a loose sheaf of flowers.*

RAYMOND. You Nicolette! What amorous nightingale
Has rung his love-lay in your ears so loud,
Your little unkissed lips remember it?

NICOLETTE. I have been in the dell. Summer is coming,
I saw a waterlily in the pool.

Singing.

That bird he sang so loud and clear,
The squirrel came, and the timid deer;
Sweet was the lay, so sweet;
The water nymph she left her mere,

And would that my true love were here,
Ah, the passing of spring is fleet.

There is a linnet's nest down in our wood.

RAYMOND. And yet, you did not come to tell me this—
You have been crying. Is it for your brother?
Is't for Lothaire?

NICOLETTE. He passed me even now,
And stooped in passing, kissed me, and *good-bye,*
In such a voice, methought he took farewell,
'Till Doomsday, Raymond.

RAYMOND. Whither was he bound?

NICOLETTE. Why, but upon some errand to my father.

RAYMOND. You should not let your fancies mock you thus
'Tis even so, he has grown to this distemper
Which we bewail in him. Tears, child, for this?

NICOLETTE. This was not all.

RAYMOND. Then tell me.

NICOLETTE. O, Sir Raymond,
Is't true you ride to-morrow to the tilt?
I pray you do not go.

RAYMOND. But I must go.

NICOLETTE. What is this *must?*

RAYMOND. Sing me your song again!
Twin foes have we of life and happiness
Under the sun; progenitors of tears,
Parters of friends, dire passion's ministrants,
Prompters of violent deeds—Love, love and death.

NICOLETTE. Is't death that takes you hence?

RAYMOND. It is not death.

NICOLETTE. Then what? Not love, for here
am I who love you,
And would not have you go.

RAYMOND. You do not know,
You do not understand.

NICOLETTE. Who is't you love
Better than me?

RAYMOND. So quick of apprehension!
Hear me my child.
Seest on the far horizon those dim spires?

NICOLETTE. Too plainly.

RAYMOND. Even thither must I go;
For, in that city in the vale below,
Behold the accomplishment of Love's desires.

NICOLETTE. Yolande of Magdeburg! My brother's bride!

RAYMOND. In truth, sweet Nicolette, he loves her not.

NICOLETTE. He kissed me parting, went to see my father,
Whose will, said he, he swiftly would perform.

RAYMOND. Then goes Lothaire in truth to Magdeburg?
[*Aside.*
It was no vaunting then.

NICOLETTE. To Magdeburg?
Aye, and to her, Sir Raymond. Stay you here,
You are too late, and she, I am sure of it,
She does not need you half as much as I.

RAYMOND. Too late? What mean you, child?

NICOLETTE. Lothaire is gone.

RAYMOND. With no farewell? You jest.

NICOLETTE. Now, will you stay?

RAYMOND. His shield, his casque, yet hang upon the wall.
Ah, I remember . . . .

NICOLETTE. He is gone indeed.

RAYMOND. There is that in this strange haste
that likes me not.
Gone, gone! I know not what will grow of this.
How? Is he not thy friend? It is too late
Now to consider . . . On thine own poor strength
Rely, and on thy love. To horse, to horse.

He hurries out.

NICOLETTE. And gone with no good-bye!
Ah, Raymond, Raymond!
You do not know. You do not understand.

She looks long after him.

Act III.

The Temptation.

SCENE I.

An open square in an old German city. It is a bright morning in early summer. Pigeons are fluttering about the gables of a tavern to the left, in front of which CONRAD, *the host, is setting wooden tables and chairs. There is a fountain almost opposite the tavern to the right, and by the fountain are several girls, some with water pitchers, one with a large basket of flowers. In the background rises a somewhat gloomy pile, fortified, in the manner of old baronial dwellings, and with a shield blazoned with a coat of arms hanging over the door. This is the dwelling of* YOLANDE. *The* FLOWER GIRL *rises and goes down the street with her basket, singing. She stops short suddenly, as she sees, beside the fountain, a stranger, a maiden of extreme beauty, dressed in robes that shift their hue as she moves like the changing colours on a blue-green sea. This girl has also by her a basket full of flowers, white and yellow water-lilies, iris and reeds. She is bending over the brim of the fountain, and looking earnestly into the water. As the* FLOWER GIRL *approaches, she looks up—it is the face of* UNDINE, *yet so subtly changed that even to him who saw her a year ago in the Enchanted Forest, the sight of her will only awaken confused recollection, and not recognition.*

THE FLOWER GIRL *(singing).* *Roses, roses, filled with dew,*
Iris from the river's brim. . . .
Who are you and whence come you? Know you not
I am the favourite here? This is my place.
I earn my living hard enough, God knows;
Up with the dawning, 'ere the risen sun
Suck the sweet dewdrops from the honeysuckle.
What would you here? Whence are you?

UNDINE From afar,
From very far I come to watch the Knights
Ride in to tilt.

THE FLOWER GIRL. And sell your flowers to them?
These lilies and these reeds.

UNDINE. I do not come
To sell my flowers. Have patience yet a little,
And you shall reap a harvest of red gold.

THE FLOWER GIRL. You do not sell? I pray your pardon then.
You know it is full hard to earn one's bread,
And for red gold, that is an old wives' tale.

UNDINE. Give me your basket. Let me sell for you,
And in exchange . . .

She passes her hand over the fountain, and brings up a necklet of pearl.

THE FLOWER GIRL. Oh! Oh! how beautiful!
Give them to me—and yet! Where did you get them?

UNDINE. Where there are more.

THE FLOWER GIRL. I am afraid to take them.

UNDINE. Then shall I drop them back there, one by one
Into the water? See, they melt away
Like bubbles on the brim.

THE FLOWER GIRL. No! Take my flowers.
'Tis for to-day alone? But for to-day?

UNDINE. But for an hour. When all have gone to tilt
Come back and wait beside yon tower, Yolande's,
And you shall win you wealth.

THE FLOWER GIRL. Well, whence these came,
I know not—'tis no matter. Fare you well.
Within the hour, you said, within the hour?

She goes out.

UNDINE. Within the hour: so short an hour is mine

To play my part, and hark, e'en now they come;
And he far off, riding alone, unknown.
Wake, dreams, and perplexed fancies in his thought,
Till recollection and forgetfulness
Like some remembered vision of a dream
Bind him to me for ever! To my part!

She rises and goes down the road with her flowers towards a party of noble ladies and young gallants, who, attended by pages, enter and cross towards YOLANDE'S *house.*

UNDINE *(sings).*

Blossoms, gathered when the dawn
Shook red light across the dew,
Where the light foot fay had drawn
Circles of a greener hue,
Under a yellow rounded moon;
Ah! dawning came too soon, too soon.

A LADY. This way the Knights will pass, riding to tilt,
Go, bid her come.

A PAGE. Yolande! Lady Yolande!
All's still! She sleeps.

THE LADY. Nay, call her yet again!

THE PAGE. Yolande! Yolande! 'Tis vain.

THE GALLANT. Most sweet Yolande!
Will you not come? Not look on us, Yolande?
The tilt is set, we wait but you, Yolande!

UNDINE *(approaching)*. Flowers, ladies, flowers to bind upon your brows!
Gentles, a garland for your lady love.

Sings.

The lily on the stream
Laments the risen sun;
All night upon the water's breast
Of my beloved I dream;
My dream is dying in the west,
And my delight is done.

THE PAGE. Ladies! away! Why will you longer tarry?
See where the horsemen ride, a cloud of dust
Before them, and the bright sun on their helms.
Come, e'er the morn hath lost its freshness, come!

THE GALLANT. Yolande! Yolande! Ah, yet again, Yolande!

A GIRL. Sir, you may cry all day, she will not hear.
Nay, cry and cry, so proud is this Yolande,
Some woe shall follow on her fatal beauty,
Unless she turn. Nay, leave to call on her
There are as fair elsewhere.

OTHERS. Let us away!
Merrily as we go, the song, the song!

They go out, singing as they go.

THE SONG.

While the morning sun is bright
On their armour, come away!
Roses still before them strowing,
Garlands woven of the bay;
These shall aid them in the fight,
Favours fair of Love's bestowing,
Kisses blown from fingers white,
While the winds their plumes are blowing,
Tossing, dancing, in the fray.

Meantime the street is gradually filling. Some pass down the road towards the lists, others linger to talk. An old woman enters selling charms. A party of horsemen ride in, hot and dusty, and draw rein at the tavern door.

CONRAD. A cup of wine to welcome you!
What, Fritz!
A cup of wine to drink your lady's health.

A HORSEMAN. A right deep draught, for we have rid, good Conrad,
Since break of dawn thro' yonder winding valley
To see the tilt to-day.

CONRAD. White wine, or red?
Here is good choice of both.

THE OLD WOMAN. Charms, gentles, charms!
Sweet maidens, charms to keep your lovers true!

FRITZ *(holding out his glass towards the house of* YOLANDE). A health! A health!

SEVERAL. Yolande of Magdeburg!
Yolande, the fairest flower in Germany.

A GIRL. Yolande! Ah, still Yolande!

ANOTHER GIRL. Ah, take this rose
And wear it for my sake.

THE OLD WOMAN. Charms, gentles, charms,
Sweet damsels, charms to make you fair for ever.

A GIRL. Give me this potion, will he always love me?
I care not if he loves me overmuch,
So Fulda have him not.

THE OLD WOMAN. Let him take only
But three drops from this philtre . . .

UNDINE. Who will buy?

Sings.

The iris, by the river growing,
A gold and purple banner spreads,
And maidens still are iris strowing
On the path the loved one treads;
But, ah, its leaves like swords are showing,
Bitter tears each maiden sheds.

A horn sounds without.

A GIRL. Ah, see! who comes? How bright his plumes are dancing!

SEVERAL. Who is this stranger Knight with covered shield?

LOTHAIRE *enters armed and mounted.*

Hail, hail, Sir Knight!

LOTHAIRE. And hail, ye lovely maidens!

CONRAD. Nay, tarry ere thou passest, stranger Knight,
And drink with us one cup of ruddy wine.

LOTHAIRE. Give me the cup.

UNDINE *(approaching with a shell-shaped goblet full of water).*
Take, take and deeply drink.

LOTHAIRE. Maiden! what cup is this?

She withdraws.

CONRAD. Here is the wine.
What! drink you of the water of the fountain?
A draught unknightly.

LOTHAIRE. Say you so, good Conrad?
No other draught shall pass my lips to-day.
See, see, it dances sparkling in the cup
With flashing fires of light. Who is yon maiden?

CONRAD. Your words are strange—which of these many maids
Gave you this cup to spoil my harvesting?

LOTHAIRE. Nay, she is gone! No matter; take my purse,
And let the red wine flow.

CONRAD. Yet drink, Sir Knight,
The Queen of Love and Beauty at the Tilt!
Drink but one cup of wine to fair Yolande.

LOTHAIRE. Is she so fair?

FRITZ. Oh, fair beyond compare!

LOTHAIRE. Each damsel to her Knight is fairest still,
And so to thee, Yolande; to me, my love.

FRITZ. Who looks upon Yolande must yield to her
All praise of beauty. Nay, such power is hers,
That, like a sorceress, men say, she holds

In the one hand Love, and in the other Sleep,
And slow forgetfulness of all desire,
For all desire is hers; but unto few
Doth she reveal herself. And as for me,
I have but seen her shadow.

LOTHAIRE. Sayest thou so?
I too have worshipped Beauty's shadow long,
I too . . . Yet will I boast my lady love
For all her praise a fairer than Yolande.

FRITZ. Her name! her name! a fairer than Yolande!

LOTHAIRE. Drink her with me!

SEVERAL. Under Yolande's own Tower?

LOTHAIRE. She holds for me no spell . . .

FRITZ. Thou has not seen . . .

As LOTHAIRE *raises his glass a window is opened in* YOLANDE'S *Tower, and a song is heard. All stand silent as if a spell had fallen on them.*

YOLANDE'S SONG.

Ah, wherefore delay?
Be glad while ye may,
For fading is beauty,
And youth shall decay.
Oh, prate not of duty,
But come to me, come.

Ah, wherefore be scorning?
The radiance of morning
Must fade into gray.
Why, why wilt thou roam?
Here, here is thy home;
We live but to-day.

The song ceases. The window is closed, but all stand silent for a space.

LOTHAIRE. One cup! for such a song as this, Yolande,
Too poor libation! I, I too, have felt
Thy spell and drink one cup, but one . . .

He raises the cup to his lips. Suddenly UNDINE *is beside him.*

UNDINE. *Beware!*
Red is the wine as blood, like fire it burns,
The cup you pledge to her.

LOTHAIRE *(in a confused manner).* Ha! speak again!
What say you?

UNDINE. *But beneath the unquiet wave,*
Far, very far, where never whisper comes
From your loud world to stir the solitude,
Cool is the cup of pledging, while o'erhead
The light breaks in a thousand diamonds

Where the wind shakes the sunlit blooms of spring.
But I lie still, where never bloweth wind,
In a dark dream of you, of you, of you.

She goes towards the fountain and vanishes.

LOTHAIRE. Speak! speak again! It was a dream, a dream!

FRITZ. Drink! drink! sir Knight, Yolande of Magdeburg.

LOTHAIRE *(as if suddenly waking up, and drinking deeply).* A fairer than Yolande!

He rides out.

SEVERAL. Her name! her name!

A horn blows loudly.

CONRAD. Hearken, the lists are set!

THE HORSEMEN. Away! away!

FRITZ. He too, he felt her spell. Did ye not note?

OTHERS. Who was this knight? . . . hearken, they call to tilt!
Farewell, sweet maids, farewell till eventide.

THE GIRLS. Nay, we must also go and see the tilt.
A song! a song!

A GIRL. In truth I cannot sing!
That song of hers! She has the evil eye.

ANOTHER GIRL *(singing loudly).*
Heard you not the trumpet crying,
Heard you not . . .

She breaks off.

What! are you silent all? Why, we can sing
As sweet as she, and break as many hearts.

THEY SING. Heard you not the trumpet crying?
Heard you not my comrades call?
Who would tarry, who delay
When the unfurled gold is flying
Wide above the castle wall?
Kiss me once, nor bid me stay.
Loose me, Love, for all your sighing
I must ride upon my way.

They all go out, even CONRAD *following with a flagon of wine. The song dies away, the street is left empty. The* FLOWER GIRL *enters, the pearls in her hair, and goes towards her baskets. Immediately afterwards* SIR RAYMOND *follows her.*

THE FLOWER GIRL. Your hour is over. Gone?
What, is she gone?
Here, she said, I must wait, would I win wealth.

A fable, they are gone, all gone to tilt.
Ah, here comes one . . . Flowers, will you buy of me?
Roses and iris, hyacinth, what will you?

RAYMOND. All! Give me all your store. There's not a flower
Growing in garden, or the greener glade
Of deep fern-tangled forest, or beside
The margint of the river; flowers of spring,
Cowslip, and daffodil, and golden palm,
The summer's foxglove, and the sweeter rose,
And purple leaves of autumn, fair enough
To deck my lady. I must make new blooms,
Blossoms that the old barren earth naught wots of
For such a garland as I dream upon
To twine about the doors of fair Yolande.

THE FLOWER GIRL. Here is good plenty, choose you what you will,
Where all are fair, you still must choose aright.

RAYMOND. Give all to me, and get you gone with this
To fill your basket 'ere they come from tilt.

THE FLOWER GIRL. Oh, sir!

RAYMOND. Well, well! If this be not enough.

THE FLOWER GIRL. Enough! why in a week . . .

RAYMOND. Well, get you gone
And fill your basket.

THE FLOWER GIRL. That will I, good sir.
Why, this is riches. Give you glad good-day.

RAYMOND. Good-day, good-day.

THE FLOWER GIRL. And favour of your lady,
And victory at the tilt.

She goes out.

RAYMOND *(who has approached* YOLANDE'S *door with his flowers).*
Yolande! Yolande! One word, one look, but one.
Oh, do you wake, my lady, or do dreams
Still hold you from the light of this glad day?
Waking or dreaming holds no thought of me,
Whose sleep and waking is one dream of thee.
Shine at the tilt, my lady, like the sun,
And dazzle all beholders with thy light.
Let knights, who soared like eagles o'er the rest,
Bewildered by that glory of thy brow,
Turn mousing owls daunted by dawning day,
Till I, unknown, and of thy pride contemned,
Have basked in that full glow which baffles all
The prowess of the worthiest, and have won
More worthy spurs, driving them home for thee.
There lie, my garland; peradventure ye
Sweet blooms, shall be accounted so far blest

To brush her robe in passing. Oh, then breathe
Fragrant upon her as my dreams of love.

He is stepping back from the door and still looking up to the window towards which he has kissed his hand, when an armed KNIGHT *suddenly approaches from behind, with his* SQUIRE.

THE KNIGHT. Ha! by God's blood! forestalled.
Turn you, Sir Knight.

RAYMOND. What will you, sir?

THE KNIGHT. Why stand you at this door?
Sir boy, take up your flowers and get you hence,
Or by my knighthood. . . .

RAYMOND. Do you spurn me, sir?
Dismount and on your guard.

THE KNIGHT. For you, Sir Raymond?
A fledging with his spurs so newly won
His horse's flanks ne'er felt them.

THE SQUIRE. Good, my lord!
I pray you leave this quarrel.

RAYMOND. Shall I call you
A coward that you will not fight with me?

THE KNIGHT *(dismounting)*. Have at you then.

They fight.

THE SQUIRE *(running down the street).*
Help! Help! They slay my master.

The KNIGHT *is hurt.*

THE KNIGHT. Ha! I am sped. You have slain me. Lift my helm.

RAYMOND. Alas! What have I done? It is Count Roland.

THE KNIGHT. Nay, dost thou grieve? God's blood! Give me some water!
And then away with speed, ere they return;
Nor blame thyself for this. I tempted thee.

RAYMOND. Alas! God knows I never meant your death!

THE KNIGHT. Curse on her fatal beauty!
Curse on her pride! My dying curse on him
Who gets her! See what fools we are for women,
Like moths about a candle.

RAYMOND. Curse her not.

THE KNIGHT. With my last breath I curse her. Get thee hence.
For, if they find thee here, those of my house
Will do some evil to thee.

THE SQUIRE *(without).* Haste, oh haste!
This way! This way!

THE KNIGHT. Begone!

RAYMOND. Ah, woe is me!
No blessing shall thy blood bring me nor praise,
But bitterness of heart, and shame and sorrow.

He goes out.

THE SQUIRE *(entering with a crowd of towns-people).* Alas! the Count, my master, is slain!
Speak, sir, how fares it with you.

SEVERAL. Murdered, falsely slain!
Where is he who slew him?

THE SQUIRE. Alas! he is dumb. He is stark.
How fares it with you, sir?

SEVERAL. Lo the Margrave! The Margrave is coming.
Stand aside and let the Margrave pass.

The MARGRAVE, *Kin to the* KNIGHT, *enters with a retinue of soldiers.*

THE MARGRAVE. What is this tumult? Say whence sprang this quarrel?
Cousin! Why, cousin!

THE KNIGHT. Bear me hence, I pray,
I may not last till cockcrow.

THE MARGRAVE. Lift him up.
Tell me, who did this deed?

SEVERAL. He is escaped.

THE SQUIRE. It was Sir Raymond.

THE KNIGHT. All the blame is hers
Who set this feud between us.

He swoons.

THE MARGRAVE. Comfort thee!
If any comfort be, take hope, good cousin;
Not unavenged our kindred fall, nor scatheless,
If thou shalt die, is he who wrought this deed.
By thy dear life, I swear, his doom shall stand
Example to all other. Woe is me!
He heeds me not, nor hears. Ill is begun
This day that promised fair; marred is our mirth
And shadowed all our glad solemnity.

The KNIGHT, *now fainting and past speech, is lifted, and borne out by the soldiers, all following.*

Act IV.

The Pledging Cup of Yolande.

Scene I.—At the Barriers.

The first riding, Lothaire *victor.*

Herald. The unknown Knight is victor this first time.
Let it be cried aloud thro' all the lists.

Lothaire. Who is yon lady sitting on the dais,
And wherefore is she veiléd?

Knight. Knowest thou not
Yolande of Magdeburg, the Queen of Beauty?

Lothaire. What means this beauty's close imprisonment?

Knight. Sir, if she should unclose 'twould spread disorder
Thro' all the field; for, this particular,
Most strange, she hath, that each who doth behold her,
Tho' all indeed behold her beautiful,
Yet sees her with an eye of difference,
Discerning each his own ideal fair.

Lothaire. A quality in her that passes wonder.

Knight. See, sir, she seems to bend and beckon you,
And wave you to her.

LOTHAIRE. Tho' I fain would try
The effects of this strange power, I will not go.
For me hath such chameleon loveliness
No merit. Do they cry to arms again?
When comes Sir Raymond, when?

. . . . . .

The second riding, LOTHAIRE *victor.*

AMOROSA. Good Knight, that light esteemest my lady's beauty,
Yet ridest in her honour, to your lips
She doth commend her cup, and craves your name.

LOTHAIRE. Go, tell thy lady that my name is secret;
And for her cup, I ask a draught drawn deeper,
From cooler sources, where the living rock
Drips with the dew from frondy tips of ferns
That brush its base knee deep.

AMOROSA. Dost thou refuse?
Ere thou deniest I counsel thee take heed,
Thou stranger knight, lest in thine hour of need
Thy parched lips cry for the strong sustaining
Of this her draught.
Lo, in the cup thy proud hand is disdaining
Lies all forgetfulness of sorrow's sting;
And thou shalt know instead, when thou hast quaffed,

The joy of Spring;
And pride of life and gladness of this earth,
And jocund laughter,
And easy thoughts of hours devote to mirth
This drinking follow after;
And all the hope re-blossomed that was dead,
And all the light of dreams accomplishéd.
Thou, therefore choose;
Lest, very lonely at the close of day,
Thou weep, *that then I saw the better way,*
And did, alas, refuse.

LOTHAIRE *(taking the cup).* If the accomplishment of dreams, O maiden,
Be her's to grant. . . . Take back the cup untasted;
And say: There was a young unproven knight
Loved her afar. And all his days were wasted,
In longing for her kiss, and every night
In dreams he saw her beautiful; so pray
That when the tourney end, and he draw nigh
She bend on him one look of charity,
Nor say him nay,
But let him read the answer in her eyes
Whether he lives or dies.
So, tho' the word be death, yet shall it seem
But the fulfilling of his olden dream.

AMOROSA. His name, Sir Knight?

LOTHAIRE. Sir Raymond of the Fens.

AMOROSA. Pleadest thou for another? Doth thy hand
Shrink to uplift the veil that shrouds Yolande?
Thine, not another's.

LOTHAIRE. Sure, thou mockest me.

AMOROSA. Thou think'st to mock me, but thou art not he.

The maiden returns to YOLANDE.

LOTHAIRE. Hark! how yon' trumpet clamours in my ears!
Doth Raymond never come? Too faint a lover,
I swear, and all unworthy of her cup.
Shall I do all, nor look upon her face?
To arms again!

SCENE II.

A Room in the house of YOLANDE. *Rich tapestries hang on the walls, and on the floor are the skins of strange beasts. Seated on a high dais in the middle of the room is* YOLANDE. *Her chair is of ebony inlaid with ivory. A black panther sleeps at her feet. In her lap are poppies, white and red, and in her hand she holds a crystal ball.*

YOLANDE. Thou brittle image of the world,
Light thou liest in my hand,
Brightly art thou shining;
In thy midmost heart upfurled,
Mingled threads the Fates are twining,
Twisting together the life of Yolande.

What are ye spinning of love and laughter?
What are ye weaving of beauty and power?
Ah, red as blood, ah, flecked with flame,
The web of their weaving!
But never grief of heart comes after,
Nor dead cold ashes of grey grieving;
This was their gift, their boon and their dower:
Yolande knows never sorrow nor shame.

Deep in the heart of the glass
I see strange forms go by,
Still new, still changing.

Yet must each one in his ranging
Look to my beauty, and bitterly sigh,
Ere he may pass.

And the maidens still are weeping:
Yolande sits high in bower,
In her voice, in her glance, is a charm;
A fatal beauty is hers to dower,
A spell in her eyes unsleeping,
To lure men ever to harm.

But this was the gift of fate to me
To hold the hearts of men in fee;
And still for my beauty repining,
Who heed not their amorous whining,
They look, and listen to my song,
And none forgets it his whole life long.
Back returning from over sea,
Tho' he wander far, he shall come to linger
Once again to hear the singer
In Yolande's high tower.

Deep in the heart of the glass I see
A noble knight with dancing plumes,
And a sword like a glancing flame.
Thrice victor in the lists is he
Whose shield is painted with lily blooms,
But no man knows his name.

Ah, his heart was framed to burn
For many a high ideal;

Yet scarce the difference may he learn
'Twixt the dream-thought and the real.
And what is his own he may not tell,
For the wind of dreams blows, hot as fire,
Over his life, and, like a lyre,
He answers to the spell.

Ah, dost thou boast thee free?
Now, in thine hour of vaunting,
What strange song thy brain is haunting?
Turn thee, turn thee unto me;
Thou wast framed to feel my kiss
Thrill thee with a poet's bliss.

Thou ghostly dweller of the streams,
Risest thou upon his vision?
Shadowy form of gracious dreams,
Image of the lost ideal
Beckoning to realms Elysian!
Ah, my kiss alone is real,
All rapture else but seems.

Long and patiently I wait,
I, whom God made strong as Fate.
Patiently I wait and long,
All must listen to my song.
Like a shadow in the glass,
Where in clouds my visions pass,
Fades thy memory from his brain—
I remain.

Turn thee, turn thee unto me,
Heart's desire I give to thee,
Heart's delight is in my hand;
For there is none other bliss,
None other joy than this,
The rapture of the kiss
Of Yolande.

SCENE III.

Before the gate of YOLANDE'S *garden* LOTHAIRE *lies asleep. The gate is high and strangely wrought; over it are words carved in the stone. Along the wall figures are graven in high relief, figures of men and women with intent gaze hastening one way to one who is seated, playing on a cithern. The wall is topped by almond trees in bloom, but all is vague and shadowy, for the moon is not yet risen. A fresh spring wells up by the roadside, and with low murmuring lulls the sleeper. Afar, some one is singing, and as the song is wafted abroad by the night wind,* TWO FRIARS *enter.*

THE SONG.

Ah, wherefore delay,
Drink deep while ye may;
For the wine of my lips
Where the young Eros sips. . . .

1ST FRIAR. Hearken! what music hangs upon the wind
Calling us to yond' garden? Didst thou note?

2ND FRIAR. Full well I noted the lascivious lay,
The Siren song! Oh, heed it not, good brother;
For surely 'tis a siren dwells beyond
Those fast-barred gates that never ope to good,
But still to sin's enticements.

1ST FRIAR. 'Tis Yolande;
And most men speak her fair.

2ND FRIAR. 'Tis this Yolande
(A curse lie heavy on her loveliness)
Kindled that strife betwixt the young Sir Raymond
And him who lies e'en now at point of death.

1ST FRIAR. And yet a curse breaks strange on this still air,
So sweet with blossoms, magical with song.
Oh, curse not loveliness, it is God's gift,
His first love and the last, in all His works
Made manifest to man! and hark, again!

THE SONG.

And the joy of my beauty
Is better than strife.
O, prate not of duty,
In love is your life;
When my kisses are pressed. . . .

2ND FRIAR. Away! away! Our hearing drinks in poison.
It is the hour when evil wakes from sleep
To draw to endless night the souls of men.
Away! away! e'er yet we come too late.
This stillness tells of storm, this hush of tempest!
Dost thou yet pause?

1ST FRIAR. Look! Is it death or sleep
Lies yonder at the gate?

2ND FRIAR. Heavier than both,
The drunkenness of sin.

1ST FRIAR. Too harsh thy words!
It is a noble knight; full well I know
These arms, this shield painted with lily blooms.
Thrice was he crowned the victor in the lists,
Yet left the field, unknown, the prize unclaimed.

2ND FRIAR. The lily on his shield, but in his heart,
Her poisoned flowers are casting bitter seed.
What doth he at her gate if all be well?
Rouse thee, Sir Knight!

1ST FRIAR. Awake! the wind blows chill,
Look, brother, how the branches toss and sway,
We may not leave him thus.
Awake! Awake!

A bell tolls.

2ND FRIAR. Markest yon' bell? It is the signal, haste!
The Count draws nigh to death with many sins
Yet heavy on his soul. Make no delay.

1ST FRIAR. God grant no evil overtake this sleeper.

There spake the thunder!

2ND FRIAR. Come! he lies well sheltered.

1ST FRIAR. Fain had I stayed to rouse him.

2ND FRIAR. 'Tis in vain!

They go out.

LOTHAIRE *sleeps heavily under the gateway. The night darkens about him, and the air grows still and dead. But there is a quivering in all the blossomed trees, and a nearer muttering of thunder. Then, with a long sighing of wind, the storm draws nigh. Meantime the Spring of water undergoes strange transformation, for, rising ever higher, it assumes in the glare of the lightning, fantastic form, strange, threatening, grotesque, at times terrible as the remorseless powers of nature when they arise to overwhelm the insignificant life of man; a form half human yet of constantly changing dimensions. But sometimes another form emerges, still more indistinct, beautiful, lamenting, vainly rising, and soon melting into spray.*

A VOICE FROM THE SPRING. Sleep, ah, sleep!
fair fancies mock thee!
Dream of love and burning blisses,
Dream of claspéd hands, hot kisses,

While I rock thee, while I rock thee.
In thine ears the white foam hisses:
Wilt thou forget, Lothaire, Lothaire?
Ah, forget, forget not yet!
Round and round my wave should lock thee,
If thy heart should dare forget.
Who should heed thy anguished prayer?
Sleep, ah sleep, vain fancies rock thee.

A burst of wild laughter follows.

A Second Voice. Forget not thy promise, Lothaire, Lothaire!
Forget not the forest, the glade enchanted,
The reed grown pool of the white maiden haunted,
Surely I wait for thy coming, Lothaire.

The First Voice. Forget not thy promise, Lothaire!
The terror of night be upon thee, and tossed
Be thy soul with storm of despair,
If thou forget; if thou forget,
Deeper, ah deeper, gnaw the regret
Of joy remembered and lost.

The Second Voice.
Deep is the stream, the waters are darkling,
Silver the moon, on the gold of my hair.
It is braided and decked for thy coming, Lothaire!
Wilt thou forget, when the red wine is sparkling?

The cup of her love and her kiss, beware,
When she turns to thee, white with a dazzling whiteness;
As a dream of the night in the dawning's brightness,
Wilt thou forget me? Forget not Lothaire?

LOTHAIRE *(asleep)*. Undine! Undine! Kiss me again—no tears.
Why dost thou weep? Ah, that sweet song of hers.

The Garden Gate is opened and a damsel approaches the Fountain. She is richly but fantastically attired, wearing a garland of roses, and carrying in her hand a goblet. She pours from this goblet a libation of wine towards the Fountain; at the same time the water sinks, and with a soft murmuring sound the trees shake their blossoms about the feet of the maiden. The storm is slowly passing away, and while she speaks the sky grows clear.

THE DAMSEL. Why dost thou chafe and fret?
Oh, sleep, within thy sources,
Nor break to-night thy bounds thou sad Undine!
This hour is to another given.
Sleep thou, where the white foam is driven
Far overhead, and where the green,
Dim atmosphere,

Shall in thy dreams beget
Strange fancies of green fields under the sun,
Where lusty lovers every one,
Joy of the fresh leaf and the springing flower
In plains of upper earth. Ah, yet
Leave to another this one hour.
  Sleep, sleep, within thy sources;
There is another power,
And there are other forces,
As old as thine, and older
Than thy pale dream of bliss.
More shadowy thy loveliness, and colder
Than hers thy kiss.
  Wake thou at length!
Wake, thou by dreams led, and unowned desires.
Come whither all mortality aspires,
And learn thy strength,
When thou hast plucked the flower,
When thou hast worn the rose,
That in her garden grows,
In Yolande's bower.

She goes in.

LOTHAIRE *(wakening).* Leave me, and wait my
  coming where I bade,
Nay tarry not, but go. . . . Ah, I have dreamed!

He rises.

I am alone. It is, it is the place:
These trees with blossomed boughs, this garden gate,
These ever-hasting figures, and these words
Carved in an unknown speech. Here, what strange dream
Hath led me? To what end? 'Twas yesternight:
The tilt was ended, and I slept, and thought,
Ere yet I slept, of that strange song of hers,
That rang still in the changes of my blood.
Here to this gate,
A vision brought me. Even such a moon
Hung her full silver over bending boughs,
And at the gate methought, a maiden stood,
Holding a rosy garland in her hand.
And in a voice, sweet as remembered song,
Such roses grow, she said, *about the flood*
Where Hylas bent to greet the nymph, and where
Adonis dying turned its silver red;
And there Narcissus gazed his life away.
There, there alone is love and joyaunce sweet,
And gentle dalliance. Come and gather thou
The flowers of those fair fields. For thee they grow.
But when I stretched my hand, a sudden pain
Smote me across the heart, and I awoke!
But soft! Again the melody whose mirth
Lulled me asleep under the carven porch,
Once more it calls me!

YOLANDE *(within).* Wilt thou not come where blossoms are blowing,
Showering their petals on bosom and hair?
Wilt thou not come where the red wine is flowing?
Wilt thou not come, Lothaire, Lothaire?

LOTHAIRE. It is no dream. It is her garden gate,
It is Yolande who calls, Yolande, the Siren
Who shows to each his own ideal fair.
O call me once again, open thy gates,
For what I loved, I lost! Renew my dream,
The unfading dream of Love and Loveliness.

A VOICE *(far away).* Wilt thou forget, so soon, so soon?
Lilies I gave to thee once, and kisses. . . .

LOTHAIRE. Thy Kiss! All else was but a snare, a folly
To lead my wandering footsteps far astray
From the one good acknowledged of all bloods,
All ages, times . . . I would be sated with it!
Will she not sing again? And will yon' gate
Never unclose? Oh, how this silence weighs
Like pain about my heart, heavy as lead.
Again! Again!

YOLANDE. Oh deeper! the draught
Too carelessly quaffed,

Brings sorrow and smart
And anguish of heart. . . .

LOTHAIRE. Oh, open these barred gates, and let me drink
Deep, deep of beauty. Mock me not, Yolande,
With unfulfilled desire. . . . See how I knock,
My hands are red with blood, red as thy wine.
Hush! hush! again.

YOLANDE. For life is too brief
For remembrance of grief,
O, crown thee with bay
And the green laurel leaf,
We live but to-day.

The Garden Gate opens. YOLANDE *appears. She seems to beckon him. In her hand is a cup.*

LOTHAIRE *(starting forward).* I come! Ah, no! Ah, but to look on thee!
To stir not lest I waken from my dream!
I know this song, this cup I know, thy looks,
This slumberous pause in which my pulses wait
The accomplishment of some strange bliss, I know.
Oh, Siren! Siren! dost thou beckon me?

A VOICE *(very faint).* All the rapture of pure love's blisses
Under the moon.

LOTHAIRE. Oh fade not from my sight thus like
a dream.
Oh speak, and break the spell that holds me here.
Oh speak, and call me, for full well I know
That never from this hour my heart may keep
Its wonted pace, but all my being waits
I know not what.

THE DAMSEL *(approaching, with her goblet).*
Welcome! Welcome! Lothaire!
See where she waits, she who hath waited thee
Since Time's beginning, older than the stars,
And evermore renewed in changeless youth.
Crown thee with roses—drink. . . .

LOTHAIRE. Give me the cup!
Oh ere those blood-red heavens change to black
This cup to love and beauty. *(He drinks).* Ha!
tis fire!

A VOICE *(wailing and low).*
Lothaire! Lothaire!
LOTHAIRE. Hearken! they call to tilt! What
do I here?
Look how the day breaks yonder thro' the clouds!
Look on the long array of chivalry,
The Knights and Paladins of noble fame,
They call me hence! and she, she beckons me!
Oh, leave the reed grown margin of that pool,
Now, ere the dawning find me here alone,

Now, ere the wave close over thee again
Thy kiss, my love, thy kiss!

YOLANDE. Lothaire! Lothaire!

LOTHAIRE. I hear! I come! Across the night
to thee!

He starts forward. The cup falls from his hand as he staggers to her feet and there sinks. YOLANDE *bends towards him and kisses him. Then she laughs softly.*

A VOICE. Lothaire! Lothaire!

YOLANDE. Mine! Mine! For ever mine.

The Gate is shut. As it falls with heavy clang, SIR RAYMOND *enters, wildly and hastily. He is followed immediately by a* SQUIRE.

RAYMOND. This way! Surely this way the
music called me!
Oh, speak to me, one word, one look, Yolande!

THE SQUIRE. Who calls so loud?

RAYMOND. Never to see her more!
Not be near her, not to look on her!
To hear her speak, to see her face in dreams!
To know myself more dim to her day-thought
Than she is to my dreams! Yolande! Yolande!

THE SQUIRE. Art thou my master? Art thou Sir Lothaire?

RAYMOND. Ha! who art thou? Why doest thou follow me?
Away! Away!

THE SQUIRE *(aside)*. Sir Raymond! on my life!
Altho' he bade me keep his goings secret,
Yet I must speak, must know.

RAYMOND. No entrance there!
Fast barred! Fast locked!

THE SQUIRE. Sir Raymond!

RAYMOND. Art thou there?
I bade thee hence. Who art thou?

THE SQUIRE. Look upon me!

RAYMOND. I know thy face.

THE SQUIRE. I serve Lothaire!

RAYMOND. Lothaire?

THE SQUIRE. Of God's love tell me, hast thou seen my master?
I left him here at sunset. All this night
Have I been waiting for his coming back.

RAYMOND. Here! Here, thou sayest? Here?

THE SQUIRE. Here, at this gate.

RAYMOND. Then came Lothaire to Magdeburg?

THE SQUIRE. Ay, truly!
He rode disguised and won, and left the prize.

RAYMOND. Foul play! Foul play! Lothaire!
Oh, can it be?
No, no, it cannot be! It cannot be!
I shall awake! Why doest thou look on me
So strangely? Get thee gone.

THE SQUIRE. Shall we not seek him?
Shall we not seek my master? O, Sir Raymond,
I have heard voices, terrible and sad,
Calling, and yet his fear lay heavy on me
And kept me back—but now——

A bell tolls.

RAYMOND. What is that sound?

THE FRIARS *(without, chanting).*
Voce mea ad Dominum clamavi;
Voce mea ad Deum, et intendit mihi.

RAYMOND. The dawn is come, and with the dawn my doom!
That bell that tolls below, O mark it well,
It tolls my exile and Count Roland's death.

THE FRIARS *(chanting as they pass).*

Viderunt te aquæ Deus,
Viderunt te aquæ, et timuerunt,
Et turbatæ sunt abyssi.

The bell tolls again.

RAYMOND. Again that dreadful sound!
And see, the holy fathers who have watched
All night the dying, pass, their errand done.
In silence that upbraids my guilty tarrying.
And O meseems yond' hollow-throated death knell
Proclaims more than his death, some dawn of mourning,
Some sorrow past my ken or guessing at.

THE SQUIRE. Alas! Alas! Some ill hath fallen him,
What shall we do? Where shall we seek Lothaire?

RAYMOND. To tarry here is vain, nay, worse, 'tis death.
After me, hence, away!

THE SQUIRE. But I must wait,
Must seek for him.

RAYMOND. If all be as I fear . . .

THE SQUIRE. What dost thou fear? What dost thou know of him?

RAYMOND. I must away, I dare no longer tarry.
Lothaire! Lothaire! If thou hast done this deed,
If thou hast played me false . . . out, out on her!
My Love, every man's Love, and yet . . .
O madness!
Well, I can watch, can wait, dissimulate,
I, too, Lothaire!

[*Exit.*

THE SQUIRE *(Going in another direction and calling).* Lothaire! Lothaire! My master.

Act V.

The Kiss of Undine.

With Yolande.

Deep in a happy garden laid,
Where music breathing winds awake
Low ,whispered echo in the shade,
Nor scarce avail the store to shake
Of clustered blossom from the bough,
He sleeps, her poppies on his brow.

Knee deep in flowers the cedars stand,
Flowers, that in waves beneath the breeze,
Break, as in some far northern land
About grey cliffs the blue, white-foaming seas,
When all the air is idle, and no cry
Of sea-gull wakens under the wide sky.

And sleeping dreams he of her kiss, her cup;
And all the embers of desire are fanned,
Waking, to see her fair form rising up,
Half hid in blossom; then—ah! Come, Yolande!
  She comes, and through the purple-seeded grass,
Hand locked in hand together still they pass.

And is he happy there? Doth no regret
Stir him at times? No vague, unowned desire?
May love so soon, memory so quickly tire?
Ah, it is unextinguished yet,
That sacred fire;
But sunk into a spark,

That, with faint glow,
Scarce may illume the dark
Of night, forgetful of a light that shone
Cheering its blackness once, when, long ago,
A starry guiding led the pilgrim on
To a far-shining, mystic Helicon.

Scene I.—The Enchanted Forest.

Night, lowering and troubled, a starless sky, and a wan moon, gleaming ghostly through the rifts of racing cloud rack.

A Voice.

Father Water, hurrying Water,
Where, O where sleeps Undine?
In what cavern submarine,
Where the sea-wave idly lifts
Clinging weed that floats and drifts,
A curtain, lit with changing sheen
That from red to amber shifts,
And from purple to cold green
Round thy fair daughter?

The Stream.

Far away, O very deep,
Dream enlightened is her sleep.
Very far beneath the billow
Slumbers she in ocean bowers,
Under the high archéd blue,
Which no moon ray pierces thro',
To lighten all the long night hours
Her fragrant pillow
Of lily flowers.

But in sleep she maketh moan,
Where she dreameth all alone,

For the earth born violet,
For the lotos blue and white,
For suns and stars that rise and set,
For changes of the day and night,
And for her love that cometh not,
And all his plighted troth forgot.

THE VOICE OF UNDINE *(very far and faint).*

Alas, I walk in dreams
Where I my love may see,
Beside the running streams,
Where first he greeted me.

A spring wind from the South,
And blossoms on the earth,
His kiss upon my mouth,
And in my heart great mirth.

Alas I wake in pain,
And make my heavy moan,
He cometh not again,
I am, ah, still alone.

THE CHORUS OF GOBLINS *(underground).*

Alone let her remain!
Behold, this maiden, scorning
The Earth King's piled-up treasure,
All gems for her adorning,
And gold to do her pleasure,
Bewails in bitter pain.

She craved a soul!
O fellows, let your laughter
Ring loud; she dreams, and waking,
The slow tears follow after.
A worthy gift for taking
That bringeth heavy dole!

THE VOICE OF UNDINE.

They call me from the deep,
They mock my bitter tears,
Behold, I wake from sleep.
Their laughter in my ears.

He cometh not again
And all my life is dim.
What ending hath my pain
If I must go to him?

Woe, woe the last embrace,
The kisses that must kill!
O Love how changed thy grace,
Thy cheek how blanched and chill.

Woe, woe the broken vow!
O Love, thy lip is cold,
Death's poppy's on thy brow,
Thy bride-bed in the mould.

By night I make my moan,
And all the day complain.
He cometh not again,
And I am still alone.

SCENE II.

A Hall in the Palace of the Prince of Limours. Through the window is seen the road that goes to Magdeburg. NICOLETTE *is seated at her 'broidery frame, facing the window, and the sunlight falling on her black robes and colourless face reveals her melancholy, and rapt in dreams.*

NICOLETTE *(sings).*

Garlands once I wove for thee
When our love was new.
Nothing now I ask of thee
But one spray of rosemary,
But one branch of yew.
Bind them in a bitter wreath,
Lightly, where I lie beneath,
Strew them, ah, strew.

Ah, I am haunted, haunted, haunted!
It must mean death, this hammering in my brain
Of this one song. Well, should I fear to die?
I am fifteen this summer, and life seems
Already long, so long. Ah, Raymond, Raymond!

An OLD WOMAN *enters.*

NICOLETTE. Whence come you?

OLD WOMAN. From the Prince your Father's grave.

NICOLETTE. My Father's grave! You count more years than he,
And yet he lies there out of the warm sun.
How old are you?

OLD WOMAN. Nigh upon fourscore years.

NICOLETTE. Are you not tired of life?

OLD WOMAN. I? Do you mock me?
Salt is yet salt to me, and honey sweet,
And the fire warms me when I sit by it.
They are the young who cry for death, but we,
Who see his shadows fall across the window,
Are wiser.

NICOLETTE. Yet it were not hard to die,
Not hard to be at rest. My Father sleeps.
With pain he closed his lids. . . . Aye, you say truly.
Nigh on fourscore, and life so long, so long,
In looking forward . . . 'tis the old who fear
To leave it and lie still . . .
Have you no tidings?

OLD WOMAN. None.

NICOLETTE. Nay, think again.
Naught of my brother?

OLD WOMAN. Not one word of him.
Believe me he is dead. Your father thought so,

And broke his heart for it. Now you are dame here,
You must make haste and wed, and bring another
Brave young Lothaire into our world, my maiden.

NICOLETTE. Have you heard naught of . . . . have you no, no tidings?
No word of young Sir Raymond? For my brother
I do not hold him dead.

OLD WOMAN. I have heard nothing.

NICOLETTE. Go, ask the watchman, question him for tidings.
Even now, even while we talk they may be coming.

The OLD WOMAN *goes out.*

The long, long road that runs to Magdeburg!

She paces restlessly by the window.

Men come and go, but never comes Sir Raymond.
O stay, you hurrying ones, and let him come!
There is none waits and weeps at home for you
As I for him, for him: and all how vainly.

She sits to work again, and sings.

Wilt thou never know?
Ah! Will none say I loved thee?
Wilt thou never kiss me? No!
I must go, I must go,

Where the eyes that wept for thee,
Where the heart that ached for thee,
In dust shall lie low.

The OLD WOMAN *enters.*

What is your tidings?

OLD WOMAN. None.

NICOLETTE. I pray you think.
Was there no word, no little word?

OLD WOMAN. I tell you
Your brother is dead.

NICOLETTE. I know that he is living!
I have seen him in my dreams.

OLD WOMAN. May heaven preserve us!
Will you, too, fall into his fantasy?

NICOLETTE. Go, go, I pray you to the Eastern gate
And ask the porter if there be no tidings.

OLD WOMAN. What, would you kill me?

NICOLETTE. Go this once, I pray you.
Hereafter will I trouble you no more.

The OLD WOMAN *goes out and* NICOLETTE *arrays her in her brother's armour.*

NICOLETTE. So, now I am alone. She will be long
In coming back. His shield, his casque! how heavy
In my weak hand. Now am I Nicolette
No more. I am Lothaire. If he shall hear
Of one who rides abroad bearing these arms,
Then he must come to seek me. And Sir Raymond . . .
No, no; he is with her, he is with her.
And yet my dream, Lothaire, her arms about him,
And Raymond, compassed round about with tempest,
Pursued, and wandering in the inhospitable waste,
Outcast, alone, abandoned, desolate—
To seek for him, to find him, to console,
And then, why then . . . O, well-beloved, I come!

Scene III.—In Yolande's Garden.

In the background the grey towers of the castle half hidden by trees. In front of the castle a garden, set with grass and flowers knee deep, and sloping to a road which runs from right to left. In the garden the basin of a fountain, mossy, and grown around with eglantine. A heavy stone laid where the spring should rise. In the distance the turrets and spires of Magdeburg. A voice, monotonous, and with a melancholy cadence, breaks the flower-scented silence of the garden, and the heavy air seems attent to this one sound.

The Song.

Woe, ah woe!
Wilt thou forget, Lothaire?
The soul of thy giving,
The soul ever living,
Waits for thee, weeps for thy coming, Lothaire?
Wilt thou yet tarry? Ah woe!

Enter Lothaire and a Page.

Lothaire. Tell me, is this that Fountain of Desire,
Where sometime young Narcissus, sick for love
Of his own beauty, sighed himself away
Into the yellow daffodil that blows
As brief, as beautiful as love itself?

THE PAGE. It is the fount of which you questioned me,
And ever sealed as I remember it.

LOTHAIRE. Yea, wherefore is it sealed?

THE PAGE. So it hath been
All the short days of my remembering,
And so, they say, it shall be to the end.

LOTHAIRE. Was't here you heard the music?

THE PAGE. Aye, my lord.
Nor I alone, but as we strayed together
We two, Felicia and myself enclaspéd,
What time the hornéd sickle of the moon
Hung in the greening west of summer's eve
Above the shadowy cedar, even here,
The nightingale herself being dumb to hearken
A grief more deep melodious than her own,
The silence grew articulate with song,
And the night wept to hear it.

LOTHAIRE. Did it mourn
So pitifully?

THE PAGE. As 'twere Echo's self
Dirgeing her love.

LOTHAIRE. I think you lie to me.
Fancy hath mocked you. Here is silent all.

THE PAGE. My lord, I heard it as we came.

LOTHAIRE. But now?

THE PAGE. Even now, and hark, how it begins again.

THE VOICE. *Low, ah, low,*
Laughter mocking my tears,
Dread echoes voicing
Goblin rejoicing,
Still no salvation, no dawn appears,
When dost thou come? Ah, woe!

LOTHAIRE. Most strange!

THE PAGE. O, my good lord, I lied not to you.

LOTHAIRE. I will unriddle me this mystery.
Meseemeth long ago. . . . Gone, gone. . . . Ay, gone!
All, everything is gone, regret, and hope,
And memory; and nothing now remains
But love, and love, to fill a score of lives.
I'll hear no more; this song hath waked in me
A groping after something that is gone,
Darkness, perplexity, I'll hear no more.

THE PAGE. In truth Felicia bade me keep it secret
Lest harm should grow from it.

LOTHAIRE. Aye, did she so?
What harm?

THE PAGE. I know not, yet I'd fain be hence.

LOTHAIRE. Come, come, what harm was't that
Felicia feared?
I swear I will not hence now till you tell it.

THE PAGE. Hearken again!

LOTHAIRE. Oh, passing wonderful!

THE VOICE. *Gay, ah, gay,*
Poppies crowning thy hair.
Canst thou remember
The snows of December,
When roses are strewing thy slumber, Lothaire,
My kisses, her lips on thee? Nay!

Nay, ah, nay,
Never hath end my pain.
Lo, in her keeping,
Love, thou art sleeping,
Thou wilt come back to me never again,
At dawning or close of the day.

LOTHAIRE. It spoke my name and did upbraid
my faith.
Who art thou criest out upon Lothaire?
I knew that voice . . . When? . . . Where? . . .
Gone, with the rest,

All gone save . . . Go boy, go, the stone is heavy
And may not lightly be uprolled, go quickly
And summon help. I'll wait thee by the fountain.

THE PAGE. I pray you do not bid me to this deed,
For even of this she warned me, bidding silence.

LOTHAIRE. Whatever follows, I will undertake it.
Go you, and do my bidding.

THE PAGE. Since you hold to it,
I go my lord, and yet, alas, I fear
This woe-proclaiming singer doth presage
More than a common sorrow.

Exit PAGE.

LOTHAIRE. Yet I'll dare it,
And let what follow, will. Strange, on this day,
This day devote and set apart for laughter
And all the ceremonious rites of love,
Yolande's own day, which knits us twain together
Yet closer than of yore, this song to-day.
An omen! Aye, an omen, not of mirth,
Of some undreamed-on peril. Shall I dare it?
I will not dare it! If I lose this love,
I lose . . . Boy, boy, Eugenio! . . .
Pah, a frenzy!
To uncover an old fountain, long disused,

The moss grown over it, and all about
The flowers she loves. If I should snap one stem,
Should bruise one blossom, shake from one sweet heart
The gold dust on the grass, 'twould be the worst.
And yet, the song, the song! And when before?
When, where? Some trick of voice that I have heard. . . .
Felicia hiding underneath the cedars
To mock me . . . do you think to cheat me, maiden?
Ha! Ha! I must confess that you have fooled me.
He gave the signal, now that he is gone,
All's silent. Come, I challenge you, you singer,
You . . . whatsoe'er you be, for good or ill,
I conjure you, once more! All's silent still,
And the faint air, methinks, grows heavier.
When comes this boy, when, when?

Enter the PAGE *with several* MAIDENS and other PAGES.

THE PAGE. Look, where he sits
Beside the fount, as tho' it drew him to it.

FELICIA. Alas, even now, how heavy are his looks,
As tho' he brooded on some dreadful thing.

AMOROSA. Go, call him, boy, and say my lady bids him;

Perchance 'twill put this purpose from his mind.

THE PAGE. My lord . . .

LOTHAIRE. You are come then. What, are these your helpers?

FELICIA. My lord, even now the festival is toward,
Will you not come?

LOTHAIRE. Aye, presently sweet Echo,
Presently I will come.

AMOROSA. My lady prays you,
You come upon the instant.

LOTHAIRE. Gentle handed,
There's not one instant mine, that is not hers.
Go, tell thy lady that I follow straight.
How goes your labour there?

THE PAGE. O good, my lord,
The stone is set and heavy in its place,
And nothing can avail to pull it hence.

LOTHAIRE. To it again. 'Twill yield.

THE PAGE. We cannot stir it.

FELICIA. My lord, you waste the jocund tide of day
With profitless and unavailing toil.
Will you not come?

LOTHAIRE. Leave, an' it yields not to you,
My hand was strong, once, when I rode to tilt,
And won the diadem to crown Yolande.

AMOROSA. But in this task you set yourself, my lord,
You win the labour's pains, and nothing more.
Will you not leave?

LOTHAIRE *(aside)*. Why is this fear upon me,
This perplexed expectation, this suspense?
What do I wait to see? And since I fear,
Why disobey my fear? Were all the fiends,
Thirst, hunger, sorrow, hope, ambition's dreams,
And love's regrets, and all the serpent stings
Of Edens lost and still remembered,
And all the heap of those calamities
That plague our race, pent there, and waiting outlet,
My trembling hand must break their prison up,
And give them to the world.

He lifts the stone.

How light it lifts!
Nothing; a child could do it. Now, what follows?

All stand back, and wait in silence.

What? The dead Past, or a more dreadful Future,
Or the glad Present? Come, I conjure thee,

Whate'er thou art that dost inhabit here,
Appear, and swiftly! Nothing.

THE GIRLS. Look, look, look!
The fountain rising up.

LOTHAIRE. The fountain truly.

He bursts into loud laughter.

Fooled, fooled, and fooled again. This is our spirit,
Our ghost, our . . . Oh, is this the end of dreams,
Of omens . . . ? Ha, ha, ha! The water mocks us,
'Tis like a drenching rain.

THE GIRLS. Away, with us,
And tell her of this jest.

LOTHAIRE. Ay, fooled, fooled, fooled.
Fount of Desire, no more, but the Fool's Fountain.

They go, and there is a brief interval in which the fountain rises higher. As the loud laughter of LOTHAIRE *and his companions dies away,* SIR RAYMOND *enters, armed.*

RAYMOND. This day of all the days, the western gate
Set wide, and all the pathway strewed with branches,
Betokening some rejoicing. This approves
The common talk of their love ceremony.

They will pass there, there where the flowers lie
thickest,
And I shall see, at least, if it be he,
Lothaire, who looked the dreamer, aye, so feigned
it,
That all the world was ta'en with the conceit on't.
I'll spare to call you traitor till I see
The lilies on your shield wreathed with her roses,
And then strike home, good blade.

It darkens as he goes out, and a very distant mutter of thunder is heard. The Fountain rises higher. The water assumes the form of a woman, veiled, and with bowed head. UNDINE *appears. In her hands are flowers, which she scatters on the road, singing as she does so.*

UNDINE.

Strew in the bridegroom's path,
Foam flowers that fade away,
Joys, ah, more fleet than they,
Rapture that hath
Repentance to neighbour,
And impotent labour.

Strew in the bridegroom's way
Dreams that make dread the day,
Restless delight
That shall fade with the night,

Mocking the morning
With purple grown grey,
And desire chilled with scorning,
Shunning the day.

Garland the golden hours,
Twine them with fading flowers:
Roses whose petals
With heart's blood are red,
And mandrakes and nettles
That grow for the dead;
Rue for the bay
And rosemary for May,

And the lily, more bitter than either, that nursed
In its whiteness the worm that shall gnaw thee,
The worm that rejoiced when it saw thee
Blissful, who must be accursed.
The worm that shall stay,
When the blossom is shed
On the cold, senseless clay
Of delights that are dead,
Unlovely and grey.

She pauses and listens. From without there comes a loud song of revelry.

THE SONG.

O come to my breast,
O kiss me and say:
One hour of love's day
Is above all the rest.
O talk not of shame,
For the innocent cooing
Of birds is but wooing
To deeds that you brand,
You who know not Yolande,
With the title of blame.

UNDINE. Ah, woe! woe! woe! That this should be the end.

She sings.

Strew at his head and feet
Memories faintly sweet,
Hopes that have perished . . .

She passes out as LOTHAIRE, YOLANDE, *and their companions enter.*

LOTHAIRE. Stay your loud pipes, O jocund revellers,
And let your music cease. Once more, methought,
That voice that echoes long-forgotten hopes,
And dying memories of a day now dead,
Greeted my ear with dirge-like melody.
What, heard you nothing?

FELICIA. Nothing, dear my lord.
Excess of pleasure turns to echo pain.
Let sound the pipes again, and sorrow's memory,
Shall make the present sweeter.

LOTHAIRE. Tho' you talk,
I have a dull, ill-boding dread on me,
That bids me say good-bye to joy for ever.
And you heard nothing?

AMOROSA. But the song, my lord.
Alas, your trouble makes a discord in it.

LOTHAIRE. What are these blossoms and how came they here,
That grow not in our garden, but breathe faint
Of the salt cliffs and grass of sandy downs?
Why look you on me so? What is this silence?
Break in upon it with your song, your wildest.

THE SONG.

O cloven-hoofed Satyr
That beckonest the bride,
The world's scorn, what matter?
The dim woods will hide,
Our delights far away
From the chill eye of day.
I come to your laughter,
I leap to your side;
Do you call me away?
So follow I after.

They all pass out. NICOLETTE *enters, clad in armour, bearing a shield blazoned with lilies, the device of* LOTHAIRE.

NICOLETTE. Wild music, jocund laughter, songs of love,
A garden breathing sweetness . . . I am here,
I do not dream. It was his shield I saw
Glance through the trees. O Raymond, have I found you?
A price upon his head, his life in peril,
Alas, what makes he here? Is it for her?
She loves him not, she hath no part in him.
To find, to tell, to warn him, or to die!
At least he'll know I loved him, weep perchance,
And kiss me for it. Then if I were dead,
I should be happy. But to seek him first,
Now, ere they come again, and then, what will!

Exit.

RAYMOND *(entering).* I have missed him! He has 'scaped me! Nay, there, there,
Ah, traitor, traitor, well I know that emblem
Mocking your foulness. Here, then, in her garden.
Do me this service yet, good brand, strike home,
Then, like my heart, break, break—All's at an end.

He hurries out, following NICOLETTE. *Next moment there enter the* MARGRAVE *of Magdeburg and his retainers.*

MARGRAVE. Snared back then, like a moth to singe his wings
Against this flame—fool, fool!—that sheds its warmth
For him no more. A price is on his head,
That way he went, go quickly. . . .

1ST RETAINER. Hark, my lord.

MARGRAVE. Why dost thou pause?

1ST RETAINER. I hear the clash of swords.

2ND RETAINER. I hear a cry.

1ST RETAINER. A bitter lamentation!

THE MARGRAVE. A woman's voice out yonder. . . Can it be? Out, after, after swiftly.

All go out. Coming nearer is heard the sound of laughter and wild song.

THE SONG.

O Venus your rites
In the love-breathing nights,
Do you call me to keep?
Do you come with your doves
To awake me from sleep,
To the clasp, to the kiss,
To the cries of the Loves,

To passion's quick sob in the throat of desire?
From a dream, from a shadow, how cold, of your bliss,
To this I awaken at last, ah, to this,
Your shrine, and the still burning fire.

The COMPANY OF REVELLERS *enters.*

A RETAINER *(entering hastily and staying the procession).* Woe! woe! Alas, ill-omened is this day!

LOTHAIRE. Well-omened is this day! Let Sorrow's self
Deck her with garlands. On!

A SQUIRE *(who has just entered, seizing* LOTHAIRE'S *bridle).* Thou canst not on!
When thou shalt learn, alas, if thou canst on,
If thou canst anything, save turn to marble
With extreme grief, I'll call thee, tho' I loved thee,
Not greater, less than human.

LOTHAIRE. Thou hast loved me?
Who art thou?

THE SQUIRE. Look upon me.

LOTHAIRE. Have I known thee,
When, where?

THE SQUIRE. I was thy squire. My father served

The Prince thy father who is dead.

LOTHAIRE. Is dead?

THE SQUIRE. Aye, dead for grieving that his son was gone
And came no more.

YOLANDE. Belovéd, I am living.
We shall create new worlds, we two together,
With ever living loves, and hopes that die not.
The dead are dead,—thy tears avail thee not.

LOTHAIRE. The Prince, my father, dead! Something thy tidings
Wakes in me . . . What . . . tell me the words again.
Who was he? What is death? The end of love?
Could I but look on death . . .

THE SQUIRE. Behold its image!
Thou hadst a friend, Sir Raymond, and a sister . . .

YOLANDE. Away! Away! A shadow falleth on me.

The dead bodies of SIR RAYMOND *and* NICOLETTE *are brought in on a bier.*

LOTHAIRE. Go, leave me. I will look upon these dead.

What are these arms? I know this lilied shield,
I know this brow. O God, I do remember,
All, all! My sister, little Nicolette,
My friend, Sir Raymond! Woe, woe, woe, upon me!
How came they by their death?

THE MARGRAVE. Behold the cause
Of all calamities. This Raymond loved her.
I had a kinsman loved her, whom this Knight
Here lying dead, slew in his anger. Then
I set a price upon him, banished him,
But on this day, drawn hither by report
Of all your mutual loves, I marked my moment
To take him in the mesh. And she, poor innocent,
Wandering this unkind world to seek her lover,
Her father dead, her brother absent, came,
Even in his heat of anger, in your arms.
He thought it was his rival; so pursued her
And pierced her through. Even then we came on him,
And struck him down beside her whom he wept.

LOTHAIRE. I do command you straightly, one and all
You leave me here. Go, I am moved to frenzy,
And if you stay to gape upon my grief . . .
Leave me my dead! Away!

All go out except LOTHAIRE, *who stands by the*

bier, and YOLANDE, *who turns, her arms extended to him.*

YOLANDE. Weepest thou? Let my kisses dry those tears.
Blind not thine eyes with weeping, turn to me,
The world's Desire. Behold I wait for thee.
O look, Lothaire, are not these lips of mine
Too sweet for sorrows memory? These eyes,
That melt and languish looking into thine,
Behold, belovéd, doth not this suffice?
What do thy tears avail thee anything?
Leave thy salt tears, the wine of life is mine.

LOTHAIRE. O memories, memories! Madness! to forget!
O dreams, desires, that I had trusted you
And that clear morning star that guides our youth
Somewhere, beyond our ken. Unseen that country
To which it points, impossible, afar,
So near, so possible had I but followed.
O lives my folly slew, my friend, my sister.
There was another! Must I yet remember?
There was another. . . .

A Song is heard without. It is the voice of the approaching UNDINE.

Strew at his head and feet
Memories faintly sweet,

Hopes that have perished,
And yearning regret,
And love that, once cherished,
May never forget.

Lighten the dying eyes,
Set in the western skies,
Love that art strong and undying, thy star.
Lo, when the day is done,
Heavens tapers one by one,
Beckon afar.

LOTHAIRE. Come to me, come, altho' the poppy crown thee!
Come to me, tho' thy feet be shod with death,
Come back to me at last, O purest hope
That ever lit my life, rekindle now!

YOLANDE. Behold I wait for thee. I am thy hope.
If all the rest deceived I still abide,
And am unchanged for ever. At the last,
O waverer, fix thy heart, I alter never,
Be true to me, as I remain still faithful.

LOTHAIRE. O true to thee was false, false, false to her;
False to my friend, myself, the best in me,
False to my dreams. Thy cup was poison to me,

Thy kiss was death. Earth, cover up my shame,
And heap thy death-cold blossoms o'er my head.

He falls upon his knees beside the dead.

YOLANDE.

Ah, leave thy vain dreaming
All else is but seeming,
I only remain.
Drink, deeper, the draught,
Too carelessly quaffed
Will bring thee but pain.

O come to thy rest
For my kisses are best.
And here is thy home,
In my arms, on my breast,
I will rock thee to rest,
Come back to me, come.

LOTHAIRE. Come back to me my dreams, come back to me!
Shut out the dreadful present from my eyes,
Tho' death himself must blind me, yet, come back!

UNDINE *(without, approaching).*

Ah, not all desolate.
Death, may he see thy gate
Open to welcome him, life growing dim;
Earth, let thy blossoms shed
Sweetness above the dead,
Grave be not grim.

YOLANDE. Ah, woe, woe, woe! Farewell, farewell, farewell!

She slowly recedes from sight.

UNDINE *(entering).*

Love, on my heart at last,
My arms to hold thee fast,
My lips upon thy face,
My kisses, my embrace!
Now but one gift for thee
Hath my caress,
Ending of sorrow.
Now but one token this good-night to bless,
No hope of morrow.

LOTHAIRE. Close, close belovéd, and thy kiss upon me.
Now let the darkness and the silence fall.
Good the beginning, but I marred it quite,
This ending best, thy kiss, and then the night.

Dirge Requiem.

Have pity on the dead!
  Lowly they lie,
Lapped round in lead,
  With unawakening eye.
Over them the grasses wave,
Weeds and grasses of the grave;
  Have pity on the dead.

Lowly they lie,
  Sound is their sleep;
They now nor smile, nor sigh,
  Nor wake to weep.
Night and noon are overpast,
Endless slumber holds them fast;
  Lowly they lie.

Sound is their sleep,
  O wake them not!
Quiet let them keep
  Their tranquil lot.
Let no loud lament be said,
No vain tears disturb the dead;
  Sound is their sleep.

Druid Stones in Anglesey.

A memory haunts me; I would fain
Find words to tell that thought again,
In measured loveliness express
The scene that doth my soul possess;
Yea from all else my mind doth bear,
In loneliness to inhabit there.
A Druid monument remains
Fallen mid green and blooming plains.
Far off the solemn surge's beat,
Far off the mountain's misty seat!
Clouds overhead, and underfoot
The heather with its living root,
Move with the breeze, glow with the sun,
And, when the summer's day is done,
The moon and stars, revolving slow,
Their solemn pomp nocturnal show.

All lives, all moves save this alone,
This mournful monument of stone.

Wood in Anglesey.

There is a wood whose ancient trees
Have never swayed in summer breeze,
Whose hoary trunks at close of day
Have never reddened in the ray
Of the westward travelling sun.

Underfoot no flower is seen,
And for grassy carpet green
Everywhere the ivy twines,
O'er the ground and round the pines
Which shut out the pleasant air.

There no voice is heard but one,
'Tis the wood dove's ceaseless moan;
On the shadowy pine bough swinging,
High o'erhead, O hear her singing,
Solitude's interpreter.

But I saw it in a dream,
'Neath the moon's autumnal beam.
All the mosses, green and grey,
Shone impearléd in the ray,
Jewels for the brow of night.
In the moonlight haunted glade
'Twas no fairy host that strayed,
Holding elfin revelry
Where the shadows lingered dark;

But before my vision passed
Cloudy figures, dim and vast,
Like the mists that round the sun
Gather when the day is done.
And the murmur rose and fell.
Of their voices like the swell
Of a distant ocean's roar,
When it strews on rocky shore
Fragments of the fated barque.

Complaint.

Weave a wreath of violet
With the wan anemone's moonlight coloured bloom.
  Lying underneath the grass,
Where the dewdrop diamonds glisten,
For your coming I shall listen,
  I shall hear your footstep pass,
Know what wild flowers you have set
On my tomb.

Gentle footstep, ah delay!
Lonely am I lying here, while the flowers are springing.
  Once I roamed the pleasant fields,
In the golden summer weather,
Heard the free birds sing together,
  Knew all blooms the woodland yields.
Now in one small room I stay,
Where there comes not, all the day,
Sun or singing.

Music.

In fairyland awhile to dwell
  Dost desire?
For an isle beyond the West,
For an Avalon of rest,
Wearied heart and restless brain,
  Dost aspire?
Would'st thou that calm region gain?
Would'st thou feel its magic spell?
Music, music hath the key
To the realm of fantasy.
Fairer flowers, serener skies,
Deeper pastures greet the eyes,
  When, set free,
Ransomed from the bonds of earth,
Music giveth second birth—
  Praised be she.

Resurrection.

Sing upon the budding briar,
Happy thrush, a song of mirth;
Thicker, faster, louder, higher!
Like a yellow celandine,
See, I break the clods of earth,
Under which I slumbered long;
By that melody of thine
Drawn to listen to the song.

Sing of Love, and Joy, and Spring,
Never dying, still renewed;
And, remember as you sing,
Though I now am but a flower,
I was once a thing endued
With a soul, alas! it fled,
Throbbing to the magic power
Of each syllable Love said.

But I crumbled into dust
When my happy soul took flight;
Under winter's frozen crust
Many a darkened season slept,
While my soul in endless light
Suns her wings—O sing again!
After so long silence kept,
Sing, revive me with the strain.

Happy bird! thy nest is nigh,
Sing of Love, a gladsome lay!
While the lark, borne up on high,
Utters more celestial things,
Thou wilt still thy flight delay,
Singing more beneath the moon,
Till thy mate, on dewy wings,
Woo thee hence, alas, too soon.

Aspiration.

See, the vision flies me still,
Still my stumbling steps pursue
That which haunts me day and night.
Ah! one moment stay thy flight,
Let me look upon thy face!
Many lands I've wandered through,
Climbed full many a weary hill,
Holding thee in fruitless chase.

I confess, not always hard,
Oftimes pleasant is the way.
Tender verdure spring to greet,
Mixed with flowers, thy flying feet,
Woods and streams before us glance.
Many times a merry lay
Nowise doth my steps retard,
Singing 'neath the grey expanse.

Over many a dark ravine,
Over many a dizzy height,
Where, with never ceasing roar,
Sullen floods their volume pour,
Often weary, often faint,
I have still pursued thy flight,
Still thy form retreating seen,
And have uttered no complaint.

Whither art thou leading me?
Art thou Hope? Art thou Life?
Eager-eyed, ambitious Youth?
Art thou still-receding Truth?
Art thou Love, and wilt not stay?
Turn thee, turn thee, end the strife;
Tell me, art thou Poesy?
Ah, sweet vision! Ah, delay!

Lines.

Take thy fill of laughter,
Take thy fill of mirth.
The evil days come after,
When thou art laid in earth;
Where no song shall greet thine ear,
Where no kiss thy lip shall cheer.

Lethean.

What wert thou 'ere thou camest hither?
Ah, who can say!
No memory transports thee thither
Whence thy feet did stray.
Far off is that unknown land,
And quite forgot.
What surge beat upon the strand,
What wind murmured on the lea,
What fair things made mirth for thee,
Poor soul, thou knowest not!

Thou would'st dream of deeper skies,
Fable more celestial bliss,
And a brighter world than this,
Hidden from thy yearning eyes?
Whate'er thou hast left behind,
Here thou knowest this alone:
Pleasant are the meadows blown
By the wind;

Soft the sleep that lulls the flowers,
Bright the ray
Of the light that guides the hours,
The golden hours of summer day;

And with sad reluctant feet
Men depart from earthly sweet,
And life's full bowl.
What was first thou hast forgot,
What is last thou knowest not,
Ah, poor soul!

November.

A grey sky lowering sullenly
With yellow light shot through;
A river winding wearily,
Thro' long, low meadows, dim with dew
That waken vaguely in each sense
A faint, far off remembrance.

'Twas in some former life I knew
This sluggish flood, that mournful sky,
The long perspective; nought is new,
Dusk meadows, river, clouds—but I?
Changed strangely: Continents immense
I have traversed since I parted hence.

Sea Longing.

O that I lay where the wave breaks in foam under
Moelfro!
Murmur and moan melodious, wash of the eddying
water,
Far overhead the seagull, beating the sun from his
pinions,
Clamour and clangourous note tossed from rock
wall surfbound,
Wings that strive in the wind, straining still sea-
ward!

O for the scent of the thyme, the rhythmical swell
of the ocean!
Short sweet grass underfoot, strewn with whitening
boulders,
Plaintive cry of the sheep, and a haze that trembles
and shimmers
Silver over the sea, where the blue light shifts and
glances;
Misty spectral sails, sails going seaward!

Say, is it Venus arises, the seaweed drip on her
bosom?
Marvellous snowy breasts, eyes that lighten with
laughter!
O what speech does she utter in that low, melodious
Voice attuned to the waves, changing with infinite
sweetness?
Opens her arms of love, calling me seaward!

A Poison Berry.

Great Mother of our mortal race,
  Mysterious, of the veiléd brow,
I stretch my weak hands toward thy grace—
  I hail thee. Many named art thou,
O giver of this fleeting breath,
Behold I know, I hail thee, Death.

I called thee Life. Now lying low,
  And clasping, Godess, at thy feet,
Altho' I cannot see, I know
  Thy smile is on me, strange and sweet—
The curve of unseen lips, the light
Of eyes that darken to my night.

Thine was this pain; this hunger thine;
  Thou gavest, but to stay, these tears.
Behold the best of boons is mine,
  An end of hopes and no more fears.
What is this Godlike Charity?
The gift of Death thou grantest me.

I asked but food of thee; but thou,
  More gracious than our mean desires,
Didst lay cool hands upon my brow,
  That quenched at once the spirit's fires;
Bade thirst and pining hunger cease,
And lapped me in an endless peace.

The Wanderer to the Recluse.

Ah, wilt thou now the world forsake,
Or deem its bliss not worth possessing,
When sunlight gilds the hawthorn brake,
When winds of springtide are caressing
Each new budding bough?
The grave puts forth fresh, tender green,
With daisies white and gold between;
Great God, the poor dumb dead partake
In Nature's gladness more than thou!
Alas, how joyous would they rise
But once to look on April's skies.

How blue these skies, how sweet this wine,
How full thy laughter, comrade mine!
The road up yonder hillside steep
But leads to prospect wider,
Of mountain torrents swift and deep,
That lull the lake's unruffled sleep,
And ever murmuring pines that keep
Their dreaming watch beside her.

How laughs the torrent when the noon
Burns golden on the gorse!

How murmurs when the lonely moon
Looks down upon the wide ravine,
The rushing waters white between,
Uttering complainings hoarse!
His voice is joined to that which thrills
The secret chambers of the hills,
Where, bursting with impetuous force,
Out stream the foaming ghylls.

In distant hills the river rose
Upon whose whitened peaks repose,
While the vale is decked with bloom,
The stillness of eternal snows,
And o'erhanging clouds of gloom.
Deeper plunge beneath the wave!
Ah, how clear, how swift, how cool
The rapid current flows.
Stoop to drink of this calm pool,
Thy fevered brow to lave.

Till the lonely glen be past;
Till the vale outspread at last
Its wealth beneath our feet;
Till the noontide change to gray
And the hilltops, far off seen,
Pearly glow, and opaline,
In the fading light of day:
Till the summer's green is gold,
Till the winter's snows enfold

The forests, dim and vast—
Ah, how full is life, we say,
Ah, how good to have lived to-day,
The moments fleet how fast!

How sweet is slumber when we dream
To hail the glad new dawning's beam,
To greet a glad new morrow:
To rise, to leave the sleeping town,
To reach the open heath and brown,
Where, from the far, wide stretching down
New life the lungs may borrow;
New scents, new sounds: and overhead
New risen light glows misty red.
And strangely stirs the wanderer's heart
With impulse yet, ah yet to wander!
With murmured sound—Depart, Depart,
(As if a spirit spoke, and fled)
The goal is ever yonder.

Storm.

Where thou liest do they lull thee
To a deeper sleep?
Sounder slumber lock and dull thee
When the winds above thee sweep,
When the rains above thee weep?

Fainter far than dim rememb'rance
Comes there yet a change?
Recollection's ghostly semblance,
Waking dreams, fantastic, strange,
Of thy being's earlier range?

Does the prisoned spirit hearken
When above they roar?
'Storm clouds o'er me brood and darken,
Here is silence as before,
Here is darkness evermore.'

Before Sleep.

There is a shadowy vast, and dim domain
About the confines of the land of Sleep,
Where voiceless winds unceasingly complain
Amid the ghostly forests, wide and deep
That darken o'er the plain;
And silent falls an ever dripping rain,
As if the funeral tinted night should stain
Her cheek with tears that weep
The dead day's pain.
And silent from the steep,
O'erhung ravine where vapours coil and creep,
A noiseless cataract rushes down amain,
And the swift river rolls its troubled heap
Of turbid waters to a silent deep.

Behold, there is a temple in these woods,
Where the rapt spirit broods,
With growing wings.
A little lamp, half wreathed in incense, flings
Faint light, as from the unseen dome it swings
To show an altar in these solitudes.
What is this altar? and who sings
So high aloft, and with sweet strings
Enriches all the music's changeful moods?

It is a spirit singeth there,
'Tis Memory chanteth to his god, Despair.

Despair of love that none requite,
Despair of labour unachieved;
Despair of truth that none believed;
Despair of beauty, taking flight,
Alas, so soon, into the night;
Of woe that none relieved;
Of poets, all their songs forgot;
Of paladins remembered not.

He sings; and ranging now thro' sweet and clear,
O hark how gladly solemn grows the strain:
O, Love, thou hast thy well-beloved again,
Thus lulls he sorrow's ear,
And lo, the endless labour is not vain,
And beauty yet shall triumph, truth shall reign,
And thou who toilest, even thou shalt gain
The consummation here.

Behold the clouds of incense upwards rise,
Meet, and dissolve; and wet are sorrow's eyes,
As, like a dawn that fades from hill to hill
With slow retreating splendour, so grows still,
The heavenly voice, and dies.

And lo, another change he, singing, takes,
And the new song forgotten pulses wakes.

For the old sorrow by that mirth
Is now no more beguiled;
Say rather it is dead, and laid in earth,
Nay, never had its birth.
Thou has no heart that breaks,
Nor, to the yoke more mild
Submits of grief that slakes,
Of woe new reconciled.

But now art thou new born to life again,
Now rather, art thou nothing, and that strain
Is all; and lo thine ears
Are full of singing and thine eyes of tears.
And upward soars that melody again
With streaming incense mixed, but with no hopes
nor fears,
Joy of sought good, nor memory of old pain—
Soars up, filling the fane.

Then standing in that temple silently,
Where low lights gleam
Thro' the sweet cloud that doth encompass thee—
Stretch not thine hands, nor cry,
Nor move at all; but, hearkening, let creep
On thee a hush, that of the dead doth seem;
And so shalt thou be rapt into a dream,
And, haply, sleep.

But if thou criest O new gained delight!
Thy broken voice alone shall echo on thy night.

Music.

Lull my ear with melody,
Earth and ocean, every motion;
Leaves that lisp upon the tree,
Lights that grow to broadening noon,
Lights that fade into shade,
And the stars, and the moon.
Most of all the swelling tide
When it sleeps, as it creeps,
And the gull is wheeling wide;
Most of all the sombre pine
When the light dreams of night,
Fill my soul with song divine.
Music! Music! Never yet
Hath the brain learned the strain
Unto which the planets set.
Music of the sea and earth,
Though my ear cannot hear,
Overflow my soul with mirth.

Lines.

Venus walked this earth of ours
Once with silver shining feet,
Here Diana had her bowers,
And her hounds were white and fleet
As the wind on lily flowers.

Now the woods are all dispeopled
Of the nymphs with leaf-crowned hair,
Churches threaten, many steepled,
All the sprites of earth and air,
And the dolphins bear no more
Aphrodite to the shore.

To.....

O, my musician, will you come at last
And in your hands these broken discords take;
And from their trembling imperfection wake
Your own great harmonies, to which I cast
An eager looking forward now so long,
That on my thought arise, involved in dreams,
The slow beginning of gigantic themes,
The unfolding blossom of your perfect song?

Yea; for your light has cheered me, like a star
Shining through clouds that yet hang darkling
here;
A stammering utterance, visions all unclear.
And hath not echo wafted, from afar,
Strange snatches of *our* music to my ear
From that dim West, where all perfections are.

"RIENZI" AND "YGRAINE."

PRESS NOTICES.

"DAILY DISPATCH," 10th SEPTEMBER, 1901.

"*Rienzi* and *Ygraine*, two tragedies by Mr. E. Hamilton Moore, have been published in Manchester by Messrs. Sherratt and Hughes. The writing of tragedies for the reader rather than the playgoer has, it is to be feared, become something of a lost art; but Mr. Moore is not in bad company as a writer of published plays when he has as fellow craftsmen Mr. Stephen Phillips and Mr. John Davidson. It is true that these poet-dramatists must now be placed among the acted authors, but their first plays were given to the printed book and not to the stage. Mr. Moore's two tragedies are finely conceived, and written in the heroic and romantic style of classic drama, abounding in felicities of language that will charm the ear of the cultured reader. To the great mass of the reading public, however, printed plays unhappily make no sort of appeal, for the simple reason that their imaginations have been dulled by the opulence of stage productions and the extravagant descriptive detail of present-day fiction, which leaves little or nothing to the imagination."

PRESS NOTICES.

"BOOKMAN," AUGUST, 1901.

"Both tragedies are marked by dignity and restraint."

"MANCHESTER EVENING CHRONICLE," NOVEMBER 6th, 1901.

"The book is notable in more ways than one . . . the author shows sustained dramatic strength, and the gift of melodious verse. . . . There is an impressive swing and force about it which comes as a pleasing surprise."

PRESS NOTICES.

"LIVERPOOL DAILY POST," 28th MAY, 1902.

"Few little volumes have given us more delightful surprise than *Rienzi* and *Ygraine*. . . . This is a most ambitious essay in poetic tragedy, the most difficult of all the literary arts, and the result justifies the daring of the author . . . who has wooed and won to his guidance the living spirit of dramatic poetry; a fact which cannot be asserted truthfully of as many as half a dozen living writers of English verse. . . . In the tragedy of Ygraine, Queen of South Galis and the Outer Isles, he has given rein to a tragedy both delicate and powerful, and the result is a romantic drama which, in spite of technical faults, has a remarkable grip upon the emotions of the reader."

PRESS NOTICES.

"The World," July 31, 1901.

"I confess to having been at once attracted to the author of the two tragedies which make up this little volume, by reading first The Argument, as here set forth, of the Arthurian romance which E. Hamilton Moore has embodied in dramatic form. . . . That Argument is written in a Poet's prose, to begin with; and to the tutored ear, about a Poet's prose there can be no mistake. Simple as is the result in appearance, every word has been well weighed. . . . And not alone the expression and the imagery are apt to betray a poet through his prose. The rhythmic cadence should caress the ear; as it does here. The reader must fall in love with it; he knows not why, and cares not wherefore. The land "not marked on map, but lying towards the sunrise; a fair land, girt about with sea, and having wide moorlands, and broad waters, and a great mountain in the midst of it," is to me a description to remember; a gem in self-restraint, complete in sound, and suggesting as much as pages of word-painting have been expended on before now. . . . About the beauty and dramatic effect of much of the writing there can be no mistake at all."